

Jews and Revolution
IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY RUSSIA

Erich E. Haberer

השכלה

Sozialismus

РЕВОЛЮЦИЯ

Jews and revolution in nineteenth-century Russia is a carefully researched study of one hundred years of Russian–Jewish revolutionary history, exploring the origins and characteristics of Jewish participation in Russian revolutionary politics between 1790 and 1890. Focusing sharply on Jewish motivations and the qualities of Russian–Jewish activists, it drastically reverses the traditional historiographical trend of de-Judaizing and minimizing the role of Jews who joined Russian revolutionary circles, especially during the movement’s Populist phase of the 1870s and 1880s. By the same token, it challenges many clichés and assumptions which have governed conventional wisdom on the radical behaviour of so-called assimilationist ‘non-Jewish Jews’. This revisionist approach restores a neglected yet important group of Jews to their rightful place in the historical experience of the Jewish people in Russia.

Jews and revolution in nineteenth-century Russia

Jews and revolution in nineteenth-century Russia

Erich Haberer



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011-4211, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain

Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

© Cambridge University Press 1995

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1995

First paperback edition 2004

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Haberer, Erich.

Jews and revolution in nineteenth-century Russia / by Erich Haberer.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0 521 46009 3 hardback

1. Jews – Russia – History – 19th century. 2. Jewish radicals – Russia –
History – 19th century. 3. Radicalism – Russia – History – 19th century.
4. Russia – Ethnic relations. I. Title.

DS135.R9H23 1995

947'.004924–dc20 94-1919 CIP

ISBN 0 521 46009 3 hardback

ISBN 0 521 52849 6 paperback

Transferred to digital printing 2004

To
Marietta
Alexa Misha Paul

Die Krähen schrein
Und ziehen schwirren Flugs zur Stadt:
Bald wird es schnein. –
Wohl dem, der jetzt noch – Heimat hat!

Nun stehst du starr,
Schaust rückwärts, ach! wie lange schon!
Was bist du Narr
Vor Winters in die Welt entflohn?

Die Welt – ein Tor
Zu tausend Wüsten stumm und kalt!
Wer das verlor,
Was du verlorst, macht nirgends halt.

Nun stehst du bleich,
Zur Winter-Wanderschaft verflucht,
Dem Rauche gleich,
Der stets nach kältern Himmeln sucht.

Flieg, Vogel, schnarr
Dein Lied im Wüstenvogel-Ton! –
Versteck, du Narr,
Dein blutend Herz in Eis und Hohn!

Die Krähen schrein
Und ziehen schwirren Flugs zur Stadt:
Bald wird es schnein. –
Weh dem, der keine Heimat hat!

Nietzsche

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	<i>page xi</i>
1 Introduction: The beginnings of Russian–Jewish radicalism, 1790–1868	1
Part 1 The Chaikovskii circles: Jewish radicals in the formative stage of revolutionary Populism, 1868–1875	27
2 Jewish student activists in St Petersburg	29
3 Chaikovskyst Jews in Moscow, Odessa, and Kiev	52
4 The rebellious Jewish youth of Vilna	74
5 Socialist Jews and Russian Populism	94
Part 2 The Land and Freedom Party: Jews and the politicization of revolutionary Populism, 1875–1879	117
6 Jewish ‘generals of revolution’	119
7 The heresy of political terrorism	146
Part 3 The Party of the People’s Will: Jewish terrorists of socialist conviction, 1879–1887	171
8 Motives of revolution	173
9 Technicians of terrorism	186
10 The pogroms of 1881–1882	206
11 Epigones and pioneers	230
12 Conclusion: Haskalah and the socialist promise of salvation	253

<i>Appendix</i>	273
<i>Abbreviations</i>	276
<i>Notes</i>	277
<i>Bibliography</i>	321
<i>Index</i>	339

Preface

That Jews played a significant role in nineteenth and early twentieth-century socialist movements in Europe and particularly in Russia has long been recognized – and demagogically exploited by antisemites of every stripe and country. One only need recall the pseudo-scholarly endeavour of Nazi historians and politicians to equate Bolshevism with Judaism to realize the degree to which the question of Jewish revolutionary involvement has been perverted to serve ideological and political ends. As for Russia, blaming the Jews for undermining established authority through the propagation of socialism and terrorism was already current in the late 1870s. Antisemitism gained momentum in the eighties, remained a force until the revolution of 1917, reemerged in the guise of Soviet anti-Zionism, and regained its nationalist complexion in post-Communist Russia. This has not augured well for serious scholarship. Due to the exaggerated antisemitic claim that Jews were the leading element in all Russian revolutionary parties, Jewish historians have apologetically minimized the role of Jews by ‘de-Judaizing’ this unpalatable phenomenon. Revolutionary Jews, in other words, were considered ‘non-Jewish Jews’ whose supposedly Jewish self-hatred disqualified them as Jews and proper subjects of Jewish history. The same approach, also born out of an unwillingness to recognize the revolutionary contribution of Jews, has been prevalent in Soviet Stalinist and post-Stalinist historiography. Here the prominent presence of Jews, in both Russian Populism and Marxism, has been conveniently ignored by transforming them into Russians, Belorussians, or Ukrainians. The net result of this two-fold negation of the Jewish role in Russian revolutionary history has created the impression, nearly as mistaken as the opposite maximalizing antisemitic assertion, that Jews *qua* Jews were an insignificant revolutionary force, and that as such they contributed next to nothing to the development of socialism in Russia.

The aim of this study is to take a more balanced approach in assessing the role of Jews in the Russian revolution. Beginning with the Haskalah origins of Jewish radicalism, and passing on to the first substantial

participation of Jews in the liberation movement of the nihilist 1860s, I shall focus on Jews in revolutionary Populism, which dominated Russian radical politics until the rise of Marxism in the 1890s. For Populism has been the most neglected area of research in Russian Jewish revolutionary history. While at least some recognition has been given to the role of Jews in Russian Social Democracy in the works of Shimen Dimanshtein, Abraham Ascher, Israel Getzler, Leopold Haimson, Allan Wildman, Henry Tobias, Naum Bukhbinder, Samuel Agurskii, and Ezra Mendelsohn, this has not been the case with pre-Marxist nineteenth-century Populism despite its pivotal importance for the the revolution of 1917. (See bibliography for works by these and other authors referred to in the Preface.)

The reason for this lacuna is manifold. In addition to the general tendency to play down the influence and number of Russian revolutionary Jews due to antisemitic demagoguery reaching back to tsarist times, research on Jewish participants in Populist organizations and parties has suffered from the preconceived idea that Populism, as an indigenous Russian ideology, was alien to the Jewish character both in *Weltanschauung* and revolutionary practice. Accordingly, Jewish historians have argued that this variant of Russian socialism held no attraction for Jews. Unlike latter-day Russian Social Democracy, which appealed to the Jewish psyche with its Marxist internationalism, messianic determinism, and proletarian universalism, there was nothing in Populism a Jew could identify with. Hence, in the opinion of Lev Deich, Elias Tschirikower, and Leonard Schapiro, who have done most to shape our perceptions on the subject, the national particularism, reactionary traditionalism, and archaic peasantism of the Russian Populists precluded meaningful participation by Jews in the revolutionary movement of the 1870s and 1880s. This, they assert, is reflected in the supposedly minuscule Jewish involvement in the Populist circles and organizations of these two decades. Close investigation bears out none of this. My findings indicate that Jews flocked as much to the revolutionary standard of Populism as to that of Marxism later on; and they did so for the same motives, which were rooted in their Jewish upbringing and Jewish cosmopolitan desire to better the world.

In their generally negative assessment of the role of Jews in revolutionary Populism, Jewish historians would admit of only one exception: namely, that Jews, regardless of their supposedly low ratio in the movement, were extremely important as technicians of the revolutionary underground. Stating this view most succinctly, Leonard Schapiro wrote:

it is impossible to doubt the importance of the Jewish contribution to the less spectacular business of organization and staff-work. It was the Jews, with their long experience of exploiting conditions on Russia's Western frontier which adjoined the Pale for smuggling and the like, who organized the illegal transports of literature, planned escapes and illegal crossings, and generally kept the wheels of the whole organization running.

But for Schapiro, as for others, this Jewish role was not duplicated in other areas of revolutionary activity, even though he, and especially Tscherikower, have acknowledged that as 'technicians of revolution' Jews were also prominent in the founding of Populist circles and organizations.

That in this latter role Jews may have had an important political, if not ideological, influence has escaped them for two reasons: the already mentioned preconception that Jews were singularly unfitted to add anything to the ideo-political world of revolutionary Populism because of its Russianness, and the unconscious acceptance of a historiographical bias (derived from memoir literature) towards ideological matters at the expense of the political and theoretical attributes of organizational work. The former compounded by the latter prevented historians from recognizing specifically Jewish aspects in the political evolution of revolutionary Populism – aspects which were informed by Jewish motives and explicated by the Jewish activists in the organization of the movement. They ignored the cardinal truth that in the context of Russian autocracy politics meant first and foremost organization. By artificially separating 'organizational' and/or 'technical' functions from ideo-political considerations, Jewish historians found confirmation for their preconception that on a political and theoretical level Jews were of no importance in revolutionary affairs; they concurred with Louis Greenberg's statement that there was a 'complete absence of Jews from among the original leaders and theoreticians of the movement... Jews had no share in the creation of the movement and did not produce even one outstanding philosopher, theoretician, or pamphleteer among the Narodniks'. As I shall demonstrate, neither this nor the absence of Jewish motives, still less the unattractiveness of Populism was characteristic of radical Jews who followed a revolutionary calling in the 1870s and 1880s.

In this work I am guided by the following questions: (1) what was the ratio of Jews participating in the revolutionary movement of the 1870s and 1880s; (2) why did Jews become revolutionaries and to what extent were they activated by motives of a Jewish nature; and (3) what was the importance of their contribution and how much was it a factor of their Jewishness? In researching these questions, three dominant but integ-

rally linked themes came to the fore. Namely, the degree to which Jews were radicalized due to Jewish circumstances; the importance of their Jewishness in adopting a cosmopolitan socialist *Weltanschauung* in a Russian Populist context; and the Jewish nature of their ideological, political, and material contribution to the development of revolutionary Populism. These thematic leitmotifs signify a reversal of the previous historiographical practice of treating Populist Jews as 'non-Jewish Jews', who were largely ignored as a peripheral phenomenon in Jewish history or simply 'submerged' in Russian history as Gentile revolutionaries.

In portraying Jewish activists – their beliefs, motives, contribution, and influence – the scope of this book has its natural limits. Although new light is shed on the origins of Jewish socialism on the one hand, and especially the evolution of Russian revolutionary Populism on the other, these two subjects have been touched upon only to the extent that it is necessary to elucidate the role of Jewish radicals. Unavoidably, this has led to a certain disequilibrium in so far as by concentrating on Jews I have not paid the same attention to the important role of non-Jews in the Populist movement, such as, for example, Aleksandr Mikhailov, Sofia Perovskaia, Andrei Zheliabov, Lev Tikhomirov, and Vera Figner. To avoid the impression that Jews were the sole creative force in Russian revolutionary organizations, one may turn to the comprehensive works of Venturi, Levin, Tkachenko, Itenberg, Volk, Sedov, Tvardovskaia, Naimark, and most recently Offord. But having said this, however, it is equally pertinent to point out that these scholars have underestimated, if not failed to mention, the role of Jews in shaping the history of revolutionary Populism.

In concluding this prefatory note, I would like to thank all those individuals and institutions without whose help *Jews and Revolution* could not have been written. I am particularly indebted to my *Doktorvater*, John Keep, who supervised the thesis on which this work is based. His unwavering support and scholarly advice kept up my spirits in difficult times and did much to improve the final product presented here. Special thanks are also due to Harvey Dyck, Joseph Shatzmiller, and Robert Brym, who offered valuable advice and encouragement. Equally important has been the support of the Centre for Russian and East European Studies at the University of Toronto. It provided me with a Mellon Fellowship and a congenial place of work. I should also like to acknowledge the assistance given to me by the staff of the Interlibrary Loan Department of the University of Toronto, the Slavonic and Jewish divisions of the New York Public Library, the YIVO Institute of Jewish Research and the Bund Archives of the Jewish Labour Movement in New York, the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam,

and the State Public Library of Leningrad. I am grateful in particular to the late Boris Sapir and Irina Kurbatova of the archives of the latter two institutions respectively. Their help extended far beyond the call of duty, not only in making materials available but also in discussing my topic of research. Both made valuable suggestions and drew my attention to sources and little-known facts which enriched the texture of the history to be told in this volume.

As for technical details, all dates are given according to the old style Julian calendar if not indicated otherwise. Russian titles and names have been transliterated according to the Library of Congress system. In the text, the Russian soft sign has been omitted in proper names – hence, Iokhelson, Narodovoltsy, Kharkov, instead of Iokhel'son, Narodovol'tsy, Khar'kov – but retained in citations and references. Russian spelling of names, except for the anglicized version of well-known individuals, has been adopted throughout, sometimes with the original Ukrainian or Yiddish form added in parentheses. Foreign words not familiar to the English reader are italicized, as for example *maskil* (but not its adjectival, anglicized derivative 'maskilic') or *Lebenswelt*. Words like Haskalah, however, are left in the original since they have been accepted into the English language. The transliteration of Yiddish terms and titles is based on the format developed by the YIVO Institute of Jewish Research (I took the liberty, however, to capitalize the first letter at the beginning of a sentence and in the names of persons).

1 Introduction: The beginnings of Russian–Jewish radicalism, 1790–1868

In his autobiography, the Yiddish poet and song-writer Eliakum Zunser relates the story of the arrest of Arkadii Finkelshtein and members of his Vilna socialist circle in 1872. This being the first organized expression of socialist radicalism among Russian Jews, the Governor-General of Vilna chastised Jewish community leaders: ‘To all the other good qualities which you Jews possess, about the only thing you need is to become Nihilists too!’ Adding insult to injury, the general blamed this state of affairs on the ‘bad education’ they were giving their children. Rejecting this accusation, the spokesman of the Jewish notables replied: ‘Pardon me General, this is not quite right! As long as we educated our children there were no Nihilists among us; but as soon as you took the education of our children into your hands they became so.’¹

Such a response was fair enough, but what the notables failed to recognize – or were reluctant to admit – was that the arrested Vilna radicals, and those who continued their socialist propaganda later on, were as much a product of internal Jewish circumstances and conflict as they were a phenomenon fostered by external non-Jewish influences and tsarist educational policy. More specifically, the origins of the Finkelstein circle, and of Jewish radicalism in general, were rooted in the volatile social and cultural transformation of the Jewish community under the impact of modernity. The beginnings of this momentous transformation of Jewish life in Russia predated the Finkelshtein circle by almost a century. What the Vilna Governor-General perceived as a new development was, in fact, the culmination of a process which commenced in the late eighteenth century and found its first revolutionary manifestation in the Decembrist Grigorii Peretts. The Jewish notables and the Russian authorities reacted to a phenomenon, therefore, that had been in the making for a long time. Neither realized that the Vilna ‘nihilist’ conspiracy was not the beginning, but the latest indication of Jewish participation in the Russian revolutionary movement – nor did they realize that this participation was the expression of social and ideological forces which were at work in each of their

respective communities and which merged politically in the Russian revolution.

The Peretts beginning in this process coincided with the very onset of Russian revolutionary activity in the early nineteenth century – the Decembrist movement. The Decembrists were Russian military men of noble lineage who rejected Russia's age-old tradition of autocratic government. These men signified a new phenomenon in the history of Russia. Unlike their predecessors in the eighteenth century, who staged military *coup d'états* to dispose of one tsar in favour of another without actually changing the despotic nature of tsarist rule, they were genuine revolutionaries in the sense that they had definite socio-political objectives in mind which aimed at the transformation of government and society. They believed in the rule of law, constitutional government, freedom of expression, and the abolition of serfdom. Although they happened to be noblemen in uniform, they were in fact a new breed of people and, as such, constituted 'the first active representatives of a new social group that was to play a part of immense importance in Russian history – the modern secularized intellectual *élite*, or intelligentsia'.² In staging the December rising of 1825, which gave them their name, they not only brought about what has been called the 'First Russian Revolution', but also left behind a revolutionary legacy that inspired subsequent generations of Russian – and Jewish – *intelligenty* to liberate Russia from political oppression and social injustice.³ Thus, the Decembrists gave birth and purpose to a Russian revolutionary intelligentsia whose first Jewish representative, Grigorii Peretts, was himself a participant in the Decembrist movement.

Grigorii (Grish) Abramovich Peretts (1788–1855) was unique among the Decembrists in that he was one of the few civilians and the only Jew who joined their ranks.⁴ While exceptional in this respect, he did not however play a major role in Decembrist affairs. Still, minor as Peretts' contribution may have been in the overall development of the conspiracy, he was active in one of its lesser known episodes between 1819 and 1821: the creation of a secret society of 'pure constitutionalists'. The initiative for this venture came from the prominent St Petersburg poet and Decembrist Fedor Glinka, but its actual realization belonged to his Jewish friend Grigorii Peretts.

The two men had met repeatedly at the office of the St Petersburg Governor-General where Peretts was employed as a civil servant, holding the rank of a titular counsellor. In the course of these meetings Glinka persuaded Peretts to assist him in creating an organization that would oppose the republican radicalization of the Decembrist movement which

he himself had helped to originate in 1818 with the founding of the Union of Welfare. Known as a man of strong liberal convictions to begin with, Peretts also proved to be an energetic activist whose work, in the words of one associate, ensured that the new society of conspirators ‘actually began to function’.⁵

Operating on his own, since Glinka was preoccupied with other affairs, Peretts recruited a small following and supervised the group’s highly secretive activity. Known to the initiated as the ‘Society of Peretts’, this was the first organization in the Russian revolutionary movement to bear the name of a Jew. Moreover, in devising stringent rules of conspiracy, Peretts stamped his Jewish imprint on the group by adopting as its password the Hebrew word for liberty – *Heruth*.⁶

That Peretts was the actual leader of Glinka’s secret society emerges from the testimonies of its members before the Investigation Commission set up by Nicholas I (1825–55) to prosecute the Decembrists. Besides identifying Peretts as the ‘leading person of the secret society’, some of these testimonies also detail his political views and recruiting activity.⁷ He would approach prospective candidates by telling them about the ideas and benefits of constitutional government. Drawing their attention to progressive ‘political science’ as practised in various European countries, he buttressed his arguments for constitutionalism with citations from the Old Testament. This gave his reasoning a succinctly personal note that was as revealing in its Jewishness as his choice of *Heruth* for communicating with his fellow conspirators. Thus, in one typical instance, he persuaded a certain D. A. Iskritskii to join his group by arguing that its political goal was divinely ordained since, according to the laws of Moses, ‘God favours constitutional government’.⁸

However, the constitutionalism preached by Peretts was extremely moderate by Decembrist standards. As he told Iskritskii, he and his comrades stood upon a purely constitutional-monarchist platform and completely rejected republican aspirations for Russia. Peretts’ society was equally moderate in the means by which it sought to realize its political objectives. Less concerned about the immediate prospects of introducing, in Peretts’ words, ‘a monarchist-representative government’, its members planned on nothing more than to foster an enlightened public opinion that would further constitutional developments.⁹

In practice, however, this goal proved to be unattainable because Peretts failed to attract a sufficiently large membership capable of propagandising the society’s programme. His efforts led to the formation of only a small circle consisting of some ten individuals. The fact of the matter was that its moderate programme of constitutional reform was out

of tune with the more radical inclination of Russia's 'military intelligentsia' whose republican sentiments were much better served by mainstream Decembrist societies.

Disappointed by his group's inability to attract a large following and perhaps also disillusioned by Glinka's apparent lack of commitment, Peretts withdrew from the society at the end of 1821. Though he still kept in touch with Decembrist affairs, personal concerns of marriage, family, and career, completely absorbed his life thereafter. Deprived of its leading activist, the group quickly disintegrated. It probably would have left no traces of historical record had it not been for Nicholas I's determination in the aftermath of the Decembrist uprising to bring to light every facet of its history and to prosecute everyone however remotely connected with this event.

Peretts' turn in the drama of the Decembrists came on 21 February 1826 when he was imprisoned in St Petersburg's Peter and Paul Fortress. Peretts faced his prosecutors courageously. Admitting to his 'crime' in organizing a secret society, he made no attempt to downplay his involvement or give the impression that he had been misled in believing that 'a representative monarchy is the most beneficent form of government for Russia'; nor did he negate his 'innermost conviction' that legal, social, and economic reforms were absolutely necessary for improving the plight of the Russian people.¹⁰ Needless to say, such a forthright confession did not endear him to Nicholas I who confirmed the punitive recommendation of his Investigation Commission to banish Peretts to the city of Perm on the Siberian edge of European Russia. Peretts, thus, earned the distinction of being 'officially recognized' as Russia's first revolutionary Jew. By the same token, he was also the first Jew in Russia to pay for his political digression with long years of exile – foreshadowing, as it were, the fate of many Jewish radicals who later followed in the footsteps of this early pioneer of Jewish involvement in the Russian revolution.

That Grigorii Peretts was 'first' in these respects does not, however, exhaust the historical significance of his Decembrist story. More important for tracing the roots of Russian-Jewish radicalism is the fact that Peretts stood at the beginning of a profound socio-cultural process which gave rise to a secularized Jewish intelligentsia. The process was initiated and largely characterized by the Jewish Enlightenment or Haskalah, which originated with Moses Mendelssohn in mid-eighteenth-century Berlin and then was carried to Eastern Europe by its followers – the *maskilim*. Born into a family of first generation Russian *maskilim*, Peretts was a child of the Haskalah and a prototype of its most radical expression: the secular educated Jewish intellectual, who, alienated from

traditional Judaism and isolated from Russian society, sought salvation in revolution.

Spreading outward from Berlin to the German and Austrian principalities, the Haskalah reached Russia via East Prussia and Galicia. One of the first places of Mendelssohnian influence in Russia was the estate of Joshua Tseitlin (1742–1822) in Uste, the erstwhile home of Grigorii Peretts in the Belorussian province of Mogilev. Representing the commercial aristocracy of Lithuanian-Belorussian Jewry, Tseitlin had made a fortune in managing the financial affairs of such luminaries of Catherinian Russia as Prince Potemkin. In the best of Jewish tradition, Tseitlin used his enormous wealth to support Jewish learning. Yet, he was distinctly modern in his patronage of culture and scholarship. Although himself an accomplished and deeply religious scholar, Tseitlin shared the typical enlightenment predilection for natural science, secular education, and ‘useful’ work. His estate in Uste resembled a ‘free academy’ where Jews – learned rabbis, talented talmudists, and maskilic writers – conducted scientific experiments and generally met for study and dialogue in the spirit of Mendelssohn.¹¹ It was from among these people that the Haskalah recruited its early, albeit sparse, following in Russia which also included the friends and tutors of the Tseitlin family: Mendel Satanover, Lev Nevakhovich, Nota Notkin and, last but not least, Abram Izrailovich Peretts – the father of the Decembrist Grigorii Peretts.

Abram Peretts (1771–1833) had come to Tseitlin’s attention because of his intelligence and learning. Convinced that Abram Izrailovich was ‘destined to become an outstanding rabbi’, Tseitlin provided for him to study at his ‘academy’ and later arranged to have him marry his daughter. The first and only child of this marriage was Grigorii.¹² But the enlightened atmosphere of Uste and Tseitlin’s own desire to promote the material well-being of his son-in-law, completely transformed the erstwhile talmudist into a *maskil* dedicated to worldly pursuits of happiness. Introducing Abram to Prince Potemkin as his successor in their business dealings, Tseitlin paved the way for Abram’s brilliant career as an eminently successful financier at the imperial court in St Petersburg. In the mid-1790s, Empress Catherine II (1762–96), appreciative of his commercial expertise in serving the crown, permitted Abram Peretts to reside permanently in the capital. She also granted the privilege to his close friends Nota Notkin and Judah Nevakhovich. As notables of the St Petersburg Jewish community, they became the leading spokesmen of Jewish Enlightenment and emancipation in Russia.

Pioneering the Russian Haskalah the Peretts–Nevakhovich–Notkin

troika lobbied tsarist officials to improve the civil status of Jews while simultaneously calling on their fellow Jews to prove themselves worthy of citizenship through the acquisition of European culture and productive occupations. Between 1802 and 1804, they were able to articulate their views before Alexander I's 'Committee for the Organization of Jewish Life'. In the course of the committee's deliberations, the Peretts residence assumed the appearance of an unofficial agency of Russian-Jewish relations that was 'staffed' by the above triumvirate and frequented by Jewish delegates and Russian officials. Mediating between Jewish interests and tsarist designs to reform Jewish life, they put forth their own German vision of Jewish emancipation, which, like the Mendelssohnians elsewhere, they viewed as a two-fold process of internal cultural and external political reform. To promote the former, they requested that the government sponsor projects for encouraging agriculture, manufacture, and education among the Jews; to obtain the latter, they sought to convince tsarist officials and society at large that Jews deserve to be treated as fellow Russian citizens.¹³

In the meantime, while Abram Peretts and his friends ascended the ladder of social prestige and political influence, Grigorii – or Grisha, as he was affectionately called – grew up on his grandfather's estate in Uste. His education, determined by the old Tseitlin, was moderately Mendelssohnian in its combination of religious and secular learning. Grisha's principal tutor was Mendel Satanover (Levin), the most outstanding pioneer of the early Russian Haskalah.

Satanover, as Semen Dubnow noted sarcastically, 'had been privileged to behold in the flesh the Father of Enlightenment in Berlin'.¹⁴ Thoroughly saturated with the philosophy of Mendelssohn, Satanover had made it his mission to bring enlightenment to the Jews of Russia. Writing both in Hebrew and Yiddish, he promoted secular learning and popularized scientific knowledge in such diverse fields as medicine and geography. Evidently, his pupil Grisha was the direct beneficiary of his teachings.

Under Satanover's guidance, Grigorii was educated in a modern secular fashion which put a premium on critical thinking and subjected all phenomena, even religion, to the test of reason and its measurements of civic virtue, rationality, and social usefulness. This education, rooted in the German-Jewish Enlightenment as it blossomed forth on the Belorussian oasis of Tseitlin's 'free academy', set the tone for Grigorii's moral and intellectual development along the path of serving humanity in the name of truth, justice, and liberty. Still, the making of the Decembrist Peretts was a specifically Russian-Jewish phenomenon which unfolded in St Petersburg.

In 1803, at the age of fifteen, Grigorii left Uste in the company of Mendel Satanover to live with his father in St Petersburg. For Grigorii this meant growing of age in a household which, as his biographer noted, was 'dominated by western (Berlin) culture'.¹⁵ The Peretts residence was a novel and disturbing experience for a boy who had been raised in a setting which, although touched by the powerful rays of Mendelssohnian Enlightenment, was still securely embedded in a traditional Jewish milieu. Unlike Tseitlin's Uste, the secluded abode of erudite talmudists and moderate *maskilim*, the fashionable St Petersburg salon of his father was a lively meeting-place of liberal-minded Russians and enlightened Jews. Embodying 'Berlinerdom' at its most extreme, Grigorii's new home was an artificial and unsettling environment – a place which for all of its bustling activity belonged neither to Jewish nor Russian society.

In a sense, Peretts' abode stood suspended between two worlds, traditional Jewish and official Russian society, each equally unprepared to accept the outlandish ideas of its maskilic residents. Their isolation was made painfully evident during the deliberations of the Jewish Committee and subsequent developments which, instead of emancipation, petrified Jewish disabilities in Russia until the revolution of 1917. As partisans of reform and enlightenment, more than willing to cooperate with the tsarist government, Peretts and company found no resonance in the Jewish community. While its deputies appreciated their help in dealing with St Petersburg officialdom, as representatives of Jewish conservatism, they rejected the Mendelssohnian heresy of the *Berlinchiki*. Shunned by their coreligionists, the lone disciples of Haskalah put all their hope in the committee's apparent determination to legislate an end to Jewish separateness by appropriate legal, social, and educational reforms.

Alas, the resultant Jewish Statute of 1804 did not bring solace to its Jewish well-wishers! The statute failed to ameliorate Jewish life and, in practice, retarded rather than advanced Jewish emancipation.¹⁶ It preserved precisely those structures of Jewish life which, in the first place, prevented the integration of Jews into Russian society: the kahal and the Pale. The former, Jewish communal self-government, preserved the power of traditional elites who opposed the secularizing and liberalizing ideology of the Haskalah; the latter, Jewish settlement restrictions, prohibited the departure of Jews from their communities to advance themselves socially in the larger Gentile society. Abolishing both would have opened the floodgates of cultural and political change, leading ultimately to social integration and civic emancipation. As it was, neither was forthcoming. This left Peretts and his friends in the

unenviable position of superfluous men, stranded on Russian shores without hope and purpose.

Estranged from their own community and frustrated by their anomalous status in a society that rejected them as Jews, Peretts and Nevakhovich acquired for themselves and their children the proverbial 'ticket of admission to European culture': they embraced Christianity by converting to the Lutheran faith.

Having thus, in Dubnow's words, 'carried "Berlinerdom" to that dramatic denouement, which was in fashion in Berlin itself', the St Petersburg *maskilim* defaulted on their own enlightened aspirations for emancipation.¹⁷ Their denouement for the sake of personal salvation terminated their maskilic mission, now thoroughly discredited in the eyes of pious Jews. But their history of prematurely pioneering the Haskalah in Russia conjures up all the elements which characterized the ideas and behaviour of subsequent, and much more numerous, generations of Russian *maskilim*. Similarly, Grigorii Peretts' place in this early history of the Russian Haskalah prefigured the rise of a radicalized maskilic intelligentsia that came to view emancipation as a universal task of revolution.

Although a *rara avis* for his time, Peretts was the archetype of nineteenth-century Russian-Jewish radical whose personality and political engagement were shaped by the modernizing ideology of the Jewish Enlightenment and its unsettling sociological consequences. Tseitlin's Uste laid the foundation for his Decembrist destiny. There, in the care of the *maskil* Satanover, he acquired an education in the spirit of the Mendelssohnian school. Abram Peretts' St Petersburg, already socially and culturally remote from the *Lebenswelt* of the Russian Jewish community, signified a radical extension of his maskilic upbringing. There, in the company of his father, he experienced the private and public commitment of Russia's foremost *maskilim* to realize their ideal of enlightenment and concomitant goal of Jewish emancipation. But as he was to learn, there was as yet no place for them and their vision in either Jewish or Russian society. Grigorii's personality and consciousness remained deeply moulded by the three-fold sequel of his formative years: enlightenment ideology, elusive emancipation, and social marginality. The combination of the three – a recurrent combination, as we shall see, in the radicalization of Jews – was the recipe making Peretts a Decembrist revolutionary.

In the revolutionary society of the Decembrists Grigorii Peretts found companionship that was held together by commonly shared ideas and objectives which largely corresponded to his own lofty ideals of enlightenment and political commitment to emancipation. Last but not

least, it answered his psychological need for social communion in an otherwise alienating environment. But it was a sign of his Jewish background and maskilic education that, in joining his fate with Russia's nascent radical intelligentsia and in sharing its missionary zeal to create a just society, Grigorii identified with its most moderate representatives, whose views coincided closest with his own Haskalah derived German-Jewish *Weltanschauung*.

Indicative as Grigorii Peretts is for our recognition that the Haskalah stood at the cradle of Jewish radicalism, it is important to remember that his Decembrist story was merely a preview of this fact. The necessary conditions for its incomparably more potent 'repetition' later on were created only during the reign of Nicholas I, which commenced with the Decembrist uprising in 1825 and ended with Russia's defeat in the Crimean War in 1855. It was during this period that the Mendelssohnian Enlightenment in Russia came into its own as a vibrant Jewish modernization movement. Characterized by the institutionalization of the Haskalah in the form of a 'self-conscious and self-confident intelligentsia',¹⁸ this development also generated a definite cultural and political rift in Jewish society which steadily deepened with the consolidation of the forces of conservatism on the one side and of modernity on the other. The unending conflict between the two caused the eventual disaffection of maskilic youths from Judaism altogether, and drove them into the arms of revolutionary Russia.

The single most important factor in this volatile transformation of Jewish life was the creation of a new public system of education for the Jews of Russia.¹⁹ Reversing previous tsarist Jewish policy which had been largely repressive in its forced attempt to Russify the Jews through conversionist assimilation, Nicholas I's Minister of Education, Count S. S. Uvarov, relied on positive educational measures to promote their integration into Russian society. Only the reeducation of Jews in *Jewish* schools – schools based on Haskalah principles and operated with the assistance of enlightened Jews – would lead to their 'gradual rapprochement [*sbližhenie*] with the Christian population and the eradication of superstitions and harmful prejudices instilled by the study of Torah'.²⁰ Successful in convincing the government and in gaining the support of the *maskilim*, Uvarov prevailed over hasidic and rabbinic objections to his policy and, in November 1844, implemented his reform project with a new law 'On Establishing Special Schools for the Education of Jewish Youths'.

The law stipulated that in addition to traditional Jewish education in kheders, yeshivas, and talmud torahs Jews would henceforth receive

their own modern public system of primary and secondary education, as well as state rabbinical seminaries for training Jewish teachers and crown rabbis. The actual implementation of this programme began in 1847 with the transfer of previous private maskilic schools to the public domain and the establishment of two Rabbinical Seminaries in Vilna and Zhitomir. Thereafter the number of Jewish primary and the less prevalent secondary schools rose close to 100, with a student population of approximately 3,500 by 1855.²¹ Thus within a decade of the new law on Jewish education, the Pale of Settlement was spun with a network of Haskalah-based schools, irrevocably rooting the Haskalah in Russia's still predominately traditionalist community.

Even though religious traditionalism retained its hold over the majority of Jews in Russia, facilitated by the collusion of antimodernist rabbinic and hasidic elites into an Orthodoxy singularly determined to resist the intrusion of 'goyish norms',²² the *maskilim* emerged as a powerful secular counter-elite in Jewish life. The new schools fortified the staying-power of what had previously been a scattered, persecuted, and ostracized maskilic minority. As teachers and administrators of the newly established schools, the *maskilim* were finally in possession of an institutionalized 'power base' which rivalled the traditional kahal institutions of their Orthodox opponents and made them economically and socially less dependent on Jewish communal authority. Operating from such a position of strength, the *maskilim* proliferated their movement by educating the next generation of maskilic *intelligenty*. In spite of the intense opposition of the Orthodox, a steady stream of Jewish youths passed through the crown schools and state rabbinical seminaries in the 1850s and, in the following decade, reentered these institutions as teachers or went on to graduate in Russian gymnasiums and universities. The end result of this institutionalization of the Haskalah was the formation of a full-fledged Russian-Jewish intelligentsia that was to shape modern Jewish cultural life well into the 1870s.²³

The historical significance of this new intelligentsia for the evolution of Jewish radicalism was enormous. Aside from the fact that the state schools – especially the rabbinical seminaries – furnished the Russian revolutionary movement of the 1860s and 1870s with its first Jewish recruits, it was the intelligentsia nourished by these schools who created the ideological and social atmosphere that enveloped a rising generation of Jews. It imbued them with an activist, maskilic *Weltanschauung* which turned many of them into rebels opposed to anything resembling the life-style, religion, and politics of traditional Jewry. Indeed, the very term 'intelligentsia' conveys, *par excellence*, the character of the maskilic movement as a potent cultural force.

The word ‘intelligentsia’, originally coined for the contemporaneous Russian phenomenon of *intelligenty*, was appropriately applied to the *maskilim* from the 1850s onward. Although the term has been variously defined, most scholars agree that it designates a group of people who were not simply intellectuals in a professional or academic sense. Rather it designates a select congregation of individuals who sought to change the world around them in accordance with their dichotomized images of good versus evil, truth versus falsehood, justice versus injustice, education versus ignorance, and so on. As Isaiah Berlin wrote in his characterization of the Russian intelligentsia: ‘Its members thought of themselves as united by something more than mere interest in ideas; they conceived themselves as being a dedicated order, almost a secular priesthood, devoted to the spreading of a specific attitude to life, something like a gospel.’²⁴

The gospel of the maskilic intelligentsia was, of course, the German-Jewish Enlightenment which for them constituted a special mission to ‘Europeanize’ Russian Jewry through secular education and general socio-cultural self-regeneration. This sense of mission and concomitant ideological outlook was effectively transmitted from one generation to another through the medium of the new schools. Every student in these institutions, wrote one of its more illustrious graduates,

regarded himself as no less than a future reformer, a new Mendelssohn, and therefore, in quiet worked out a plan of action which he jealously guarded from his friends. [They] were thoroughly convinced that they were going to bring about a complete revolution in the world view of the Jewish people, and they impatiently awaited their moment of action.²⁵

This, then, was the frame of mind fostered by the new Russian-Jewish intelligentsia. The phenomenon was not restricted to the Jewish youth in the crown schools. It also penetrated the high-castles of rabbinical Judaism, the yeshivas, and claimed converts to the Haskalah among its talmudic students. Even among the teachers of the kheder, the bulwark of Jewish elementary religious education, there were some – Germanophile *melamdin* – who, in their wanderings from one *shtetl* to another, had become infected with the Mendelssohnian virus spread far and wide by the maskilic intelligentsia.²⁶ Still, the revolutionary strain of this virus had not yet made its appearance. Although the ‘culture’ for breeding it was sufficiently developed at the end of the 1850s, it was only in the following decade that external conditions were propitious for creating the right environment to produce a revolutionary off-spring.

The 1860s were characterized by the Great Reforms of Alexander II

(1855–81). Beginning with the emancipation of the serfs in 1861, the Tsar-Liberator initiated a whole series of reforms which included the introduction of local self-government (*zemstvos*), a Westernized legal system, and a liberalized educational system. This attempt to modernize Russia after decades of near economic stagnation and debilitating political oppression was accompanied by a relaxation of censorship and a general atmosphere of openness (*glasnost*) which encouraged public participation in civic affairs and created the impression that a new social and political order was in the offing.

Indeed, the reform era witnessed the awakening of educated Russian society (*obshchestvo*) to the challenge of modernity.²⁷ Culturally, there was a veritable renaissance in the arts and sciences. Extending into the spheres of social and political thought, this cultural renaissance assumed a radical colouration in the form of democratic and socialist aspirations enunciated by the spokesmen of a new intelligentsia, which itself was largely a product of the Great Reforms. These developments did not bypass the Jewish Pale of Settlement.

The Alexandrine succession came as a great relief to the Jews of Russia. On the very day of his coronation in 1855 Alexander II inaugurated what has been called 'the golden age' of Russian Jewry by abolishing juvenile conscription. Under Nicholas I, this cruel recruitment of boys, some as young as seven, had caused untold grief in Jewish homes and pitted Jews against Jews in a vicious struggle, with the rich and powerful seeking to save their own children from virtually life-long military service at the expense of the poor and underprivileged.²⁸ The conscription edict was followed by a series of decrees which, between 1856 and 1865, improved Jewish access to education and rights of residence.

The new aura of liberalism and its ameliorative effects were welcomed by all Jews. But the real beneficiaries of the reforms were the *maskilim* and those Jewish parents, rich as well as poor, who availed themselves of the new educational opportunities of Alexander's reign. For them, rather than Russian Jewry in general, who continued to live in a state of abject poverty and legal disabilities, the period of the Great Reforms was indeed a 'golden age' in that it gave their off-spring, the children of the Haskalah, the long-sought possibility to advance socially and economically in Russian society. But the opportunity thus created – and eagerly exploited – brought with it a profound change in the make-up and ideology of the maskilic intelligentsia, initiating a process which eventually led to the political radicalization of Jews.

Alexander's educational reforms in general, and his Jewish policies in particular, gave rise to what Elias Tscherikower called a 'modern diploma intelligentsia' (Jews who studied for and received a university,

or comparable professional, degree).²⁹ The creation of this new social stratum progressed rapidly in the 1860s and 1870s. The quasi-emanipatory atmosphere of the Alexandrine era exerted such a powerful influence on the thinking and behaviour of Jews that many were willing to override Orthodox objections to secular culture and public education. Crucial for this change in attitude was the November law of 1861. It made Jews graduating from post-secondary schools eligible for state employment throughout Russia, as well as permitting them to pursue professional and commercial careers outside of the Pale of Settlement. Promulgated in the same year as the statutes on the emancipation of the serfs, the law gave the impression – as did the whole tenor of Alexander's Jewish legislation – that Jewish emancipation was in the offing and that education could make it an immediate reality.

This article of faith acted as an irresistible stimulus for Jews to enter Russian schools in the hope of claiming an academic degree or professional certificate. The first to make good on this promise were the students of the rabbinical seminaries who had been allowed to continue their education in Russian universities since 1856. Next in line were the hundreds of students who had graduated from Jewish crown schools or from Russian gymnasiums prior to 1861; followed, finally, by the thousands of Jewish students who entered Russian secondary schools after 1861.

Indeed, there was a dramatic increase in the number of Jews attending secondary and post-secondary schools. In 1853 there were only 159 Jews enrolled in Russian gymnasiums, constituting little more than 1 per cent of the total student population. Their numbers quickly climbed to 552 (3.2 per cent), 2,045 (5.6 percent), and 7,004 (12 percent) for the years of 1863, 1870, and 1880 respectively.³⁰ The entry of these students into diploma granting institutions of higher learning began to show up statistically in 1865. In that year, 129 or 3 per cent of all students attending post-secondary schools were Jewish. By 1876, this figure increased to over 300 and, finally, settled at around 2,000 or approximately 15 per cent in the mid-1880s. Jewish presence was particularly pronounced in the faculties of medicine and law. For instance, in 1886, over 40 per cent of law and medical students at the University of Kharkov and the University of New Russia in Odessa were Jewish. This trend was as true for the 1860s and 1870s as it was for the 1880s, and duly reflected the tendency of Jewish youth to study for a diploma which held out the prospect for a professional career in government service or Russian society at large.³¹ It also reflected the Russian cultural orientation of the new 'diploma intelligentsia'.

The decade of the sixties witnessed, in fact, the transformation of the

old maskilic intelligentsia into a Russian educated intellectual elite whose outlook and aspirations were closely tied to contemporaneous liberal and radical elements in Russian society. In other words, the new *diplomirte yidishe inteligenz* and its numerous aspirants in the rabbinical seminaries, gymnasiums, universities, medical schools, and vocational institutes superseded the old-fashioned *maskilim* of the 1840s and 1850s. It transformed the Haskalah from a German-Jewish phenomenon into a Russian-Jewish ideology of assimilation and emancipation. Education *à la russe*, or rather 'Russification', was now seen as a fair prize for gaining civil liberties. 'Europeanization' now came to be understood as 'the enlightenment of Jews through Russian language and in the Russian spirit'.³² This was accompanied by an unprecedented surge of pro-Russian sentiment and loyalist gratitude towards the beneficent Tsar-Liberator. But while this attitude was widely shared in maskilic circles, and persisted even after Alexander's 'official liberalism' gave way to renewed conservatism, the *Russian spirit* of the 'new enlightenment' produced more than loyal, educated, and 'useful' Jewish subjects of the tsarist state: it also produced Jewish cadres for the Russian revolutionary movement.

The formation of these cadres was directly related to the 'Russification' of the Haskalah. Two interrelated and mutually reinforcing socio-ideological developments were at work in this revolutionizing process: namely, the already mentioned appearance of a Russian educated *yidishe inteligenz*, and the still to be discussed concomitant fusion of maskilic tradition with Russian nihilism.

Nihilism was the most spontaneous and radical expression of the Russian renaissance of the 1860s. Essentially, it was a 'cultural revolution' of the young generation against the existing order in the name of personal emancipation and social progress. Spear-headed by the *raznochintsy*, commoners who began to populate the universities during the reform period, nihilism evolved an alternative life-style guided by rational principles, utilitarian ethics, and individual liberty. In its quest for emancipation through scientific knowledge, critical thinking, and unrestrained socio-cultural creativity, the nihilist phenomenon resembled the philosophical and ideological excitement characteristic of the French Enlightenment, with the *raznochintsy* assuming the role of the philosophes in their clamour for 'the destruction of all authority ... [and] the ridiculing of all *res sacrae*'.³³

The Russian 'philosophe' par excellence was Nikolai Chernyshevsky. More than any other exponent of *raznochintsy* ideology, he was a true encyclopaedist who made contemporary Western social and political

thought accessible to the inquisitive minds of Russia's youthful intelligentsia. But most significant in expressing and shaping the ideals of the latter was his 1863 book *What Is to Be Done? The Tales of the New People*. The heroine of the novel, Vera Pavlovna, and her companion Pavel Rahkmetov, embodied all the redemptive social and spiritual virtues of the 'new people of the sixties'. Their communal life-style of work, free love, and learning made them perfect role models for emancipated men and women. Ironically, these 'new people' came to be known as 'nihilists' even though Chernyshevsky sought to discredit this unseemly designation in *What Is to Be Done?*

While Chernyshevsky and many of his admirers rejected the nihilist label as derogatory and totally inappropriate for characterizing the 'new people', others readily accepted it and found it 'personalized' in the fictional character of Turgenev's Bazarov in *Fathers and Sons*.³⁴ Foremost in this respect was Dmitri Pisarev. In his approval and elaboration of the term, Pisarev gave nihilism its final polish as an ideology of the *raznochintsy* movement. He fashioned a philosophy that emphasized the role of the 'rational egoist'. As an agent of progress, he would effect his own, as well as society's, emancipation through the acquisition of critical reason and an education that was strictly scientific and utilitarian. Science, both as an educational experience and as a useful profession, was seen as 'a panacea for all social ills and the only path to a better society'.³⁵

The point of departure for this journey along the road of progress was the 'emancipation of the individual' by virtue of his own volition, his own desire to enrich his personality in the pursuit of socially applicable knowledge such as medicine, chemistry, biology, engineering, and jurisprudence. These vocations were to be the ambition of the neophytes of the 'nihilist enlightenment' which promised the making of a new society. It was a promise which, especially in its Pisarevian pronouncements, rung a familiar note for Jews brought up in the tradition of the Haskalah.³⁶ They, and more directly, those already studying in Russian gymnasiums and universities – the spawning ground of nihilist beliefs and life-style – were psychologically ready and intellectually prepared to absorb the ideas of a kindred ideology.

The potential for merging the nihilist off-shoot of the Russian cultural renaissance with the post-Nicholaevan Haskalah is readily apparent. As a philosophy of emancipation Russian nihilism can be viewed as an extension of the Jewish Enlightenment: it reinforced and radicalized its ideals of secular learning, self-improvement, and social responsibility. The ideas of the Haskalah, especially as propagated by its more zealous representatives, predisposed young Jews to embrace nihilism with its emphasis on 'the secularization of wisdom' and 'the utility of knowledge'

in liberating the individual and society from supposed medieval institutions and prejudices. In the Jewish context, the pillars of the 'nihilist value system' – scientism, utilitarianism, and individualism³⁷ – provided the sort of moral and intellectual support sought by the 'sons' in their revolt against what they saw as the hypocritical religious and social order in the Pale. Scientism answered their existential needs for a rational ontological ideology which harmonized with their ingrained respect for secular education. Utilitarianism confirmed their philanthropic ethics in making it morally obligatory to acquire socially applicable knowledge. And finally, individualism encouraged their own personal striving for emancipation as a legitimate and necessary means of social progress.

Jewish nihilism took the form of a cultural movement composed of numerous informal study circles. These circles organized 'libraries' and schools, and generally engaged in all sorts of unauthorized educational activity. Here the concept of 'Europeanization' was subsumed under the new mission of a populist crusade to bring the fruits of European civilization in general, and Russian culture in particular, to the Jewish people. Spear-heading this crusade were Jewish gymnasium students and rabbinical seminarians. In places like Vilna, Mogilev, Zhitomir, and Kiev, they formed 'circles of self-education' which, in turn, proliferated by attracting talmudists, pupils of Jewish crown schools, and privately educated children of wealthy Jewish merchants. Meeting more or less regularly, members would read and discuss Russian literature, articles from the Russian-Jewish periodical press, and works of the German-Jewish Haskalah. Some ventured to write their own Russian, Hebrew, and Yiddish compositions criticizing and satirizing Jewish life and its Orthodox leadership. These they circulated in manuscript form or, on occasion, were able to get published in local newspapers. Eventually, as the groups matured and increased in size, they applied themselves to the task of popular education as volunteer teachers of free literary schools of their own creation or, more frequently, in the talmud-torah institutions of the Jewish community. The popularity of literary schools within and outside of talmud-torah establishments and the radicalizing potential of this activity has been widely attested in the memoir literature.³⁸

What is equally apparent is that the Russifying 'enlightenment propaganda' of the maskilic nihilists evolved organically from their own Haskalah inspired self-education and critique of traditional Jewish life. Facilitated and strengthened by nihilist influences, it also signified a radical continuation of the perennial conflict between traditionalists and modernists in which, up to a point, the rebellious 'sons' enjoyed the tacit support of the maskilic 'fathers'. Yet, the very nature of this uncompromising struggle and the expansive character of nihilist activity in

terms of personal emancipation and social obligation soon diverted the 'sons' from the mainstream of Jewish life into the turbulent waters of Russian radicalism.

The journey which led Jewish nihilists to anchor their ship in the harbour of Russian revolution will be detailed in later chapters. Here it suffices to state that the maskilic subculture of nihilist dissent served as an apprenticeship for preaching socialism, propagating revolution, and living 'underground' later on. Those who partook in this preparation were tested for a new life which brought them into conflict with established authorities, both Jewish and Gentile. For, as they discovered invariably, their social activism was not only opposed by Orthodox Jews, but also by tsarist officials who intimidated their maskilic well-wishers and took stern measures to suppress their literary schools and special talmud-torah classes. On almost every level they had to struggle against unyielding opponents who viewed their unconventional behaviour and unauthorized activity as subversive to the established order of traditional Jewish and official Russian society. For those who persevered this was a 'school of dissent' which imbued them with a sense of mission, gave them the stamina to fight on, and trained them to operate in a hostile environment.³⁹ There was also the reward of intimate comradeship, of unbound optimism, and, last but not least, the feeling of belonging to a select group of people who self-consciously viewed themselves as the vanguard of progress. All these things, and the corporate spirit fostered by their *kruzhkovaia zhizn'*, their life in circles and communes, contributed to their radicalization and prepared them to cope with the travails of the future. In attracting and socializing numerous youths, the subculture of Jewish nihilism created a reservoir of prospective socialist Jews who eventually became active as propagandists, technicians, and organizers of revolution.

In the meantime, while the 'nihilist enlightenment' conquered the Jewish youth, Russian radicalism put forth its revolutionary shoots. These were nourished by a long tradition of political and social dissent which, since the Decembrist revolt of 1825, was further enriched by Western socialist ideas and indigenous Russian populist thinking. Nihilism inherited this tradition and activated its revolutionary message.

Early, sporadic manifestations of revolutionary action occurred immediately after Alexander II's accession to the Romanov throne in 1855. But it was only with the formation of the Society of Land and Freedom (*Zemlia i Volia*) in 1861 that a genuine revolutionary organization came into existence. Also known as the first *Zemlia i Volia* to distinguish it from its more illustrious Populist namesake of the 1870s, this society

demanded a radical extension of the Alexandrine reforms. Its members sought to give political shape to an expected post-emancipation *buntarstvo* (peasant rebellion or jacquerie) by uniting the democratic-liberal opposition to provide leadership to the peasants and articulate their quest for 'land' and 'freedom'. Ideally, its members hoped to prevent a destructive peasant uprising by convincing the government to grant a National Assembly (Zemskii Sobor) that would be responsive to the 'people's needs'. None of this materialized: the peasants did not rebel, Alexander had no intention of introducing a constitutional system, and the intelligentsia remained politically disunited. Persecuted by the tsarist police, Zemlia i Volia ceased to exist in the winter of 1863/64. Now it was the turn of more radical elements to pick up where the defunct society had left off.

From 1864 until near the end of the decade the centre stage of Russian radicalism was occupied by ultra-extremist nihilists. Exemplified by Nikolai Ishutin's and Dmitrii Karakazov's conspiratorial society 'Organization', and its highly secretive inner group called 'Hell', they stripped nihilism of its humanistic content by advocating unrestrained revolutionary violence. Properly called 'militant prophets' of destruction, the Ishutin-Karakovtsy were not interested in education as vehicle of personal emancipation and social progress: they were 'real' nihilists who sought the total obliteration of existing society by igniting a massive peasant rebellion that would sweep away *all* the enemies of 'the people'.⁴⁰

Determined to act out their 'phantasmagoric dreams of violence',⁴¹ Karakazov attempted to assassinate Alexander II on 4 April 1866. Although shot at from a close range, the Tsar escaped unharmed. In the light of this act and subsequent revelations, the Ishutin-Karakazov conspiracy became illuminated to such a degree that the government, for its part, took the ghost of revolution for real and adopted a policy of large-scale repression to root out political and social dissent. This, in turn, vindicated the terrorist legacy of the Ishutintsy and made Karakazov, who was promptly executed, a hero in the eyes of future generations of revolutionaries.

Leaving aside the late 1860s, the last two years of which already belong to the new Populist era of the seventies, we find that only a small number of Jews were attracted to the revolutionary experiments of nihilist radicalism between 1856 and 1868. The authoritative Soviet biobibliographical dictionary of revolutionary activists lists no more than nineteen Jews who were involved in antigovernment activity.⁴² Except for one, all were students whose radicalization occurred in a university setting and in most cases coincided with student disorders in the early sixties. As a social group they belonged to that small cohort of Jews,

usually of well-to-do assimilationist families, who had been the first to benefit from the liberalizing educational policies of Alexander II. Thus, while most Jewish youths were still preoccupied with their own emancipatory desires and peaceful endeavours to spread enlightenment among the Jews, they were almost immediately drawn into the maelstrom of Russian radicalism. Of the nineteen persons in question only one, however, continued his radical engagement beyond the 1860s. For the majority this was a one-time affair connected with the student strikes and demonstration of 1861–62. Nonetheless, there were some who merit special attention because of their more substantial role in the pre-Populist revolutionary movement.

To begin with, there was Veniamin Osipovich Portugalov (1835–96) and his friend Lev Moiseevich Zelenskii (1835–19?) who deserve to be called the first Russian-Jewish revolutionaries since the days of Grigorii Peretts. Both were of similar social background. Sons of wealthy, maskilic merchant families living in Poltava, they graduated from the local gymnasium and, in 1854, enrolled in the medical faculty of Kharkov University. Here they joined the Bekman circle, a secret student society of a dozen members who associated with the Moscow ‘Vertepniki’ and shared with them the reputation of having been the only two ‘illegal and potentially revolutionary organizations’ in Russia prior to 1861. The declared aim of the Kharkov society was ‘to arouse a general revolution in Russia beginning with the emancipation of the peasants’.⁴³

Initially, the Bekman circle was mainly active in local university affairs and most vocal in demanding student rights and self-government. In this context nationality became an issue since Ukrainian and Jewish students considered themselves particularly victimized because of to their ethnic origins. At this instance, as on other occasions in his subsequent career as publicist and social activist, Portugalov acted as a spokesman for Jewish equality by denouncing that Jewish students were compelled to hide their background and even suffered discrimination from their own fellow students.⁴⁴

The general restlessness at Kharkov University led to student disturbances in the autumn of 1858. Along with other members of the circle, Portugalov and Zelenskii played a prominent role in organizing and propagandizing the rebellious students in the spirit of revolution. But it was in the aftermath of this event that their contribution to the Bekman circle became particularly pronounced. In effect, they contributed to its transformation into a relatively large and politically explicit organization known as the Kharkov-Kiev secret society.

Expelled from the university for his part in the student unrest, Portugalov had left Kharkov to continue his studies – and subversive

activity – at the University of Kiev. Besides initiating the formation of so-called literary student circles, he took advantage of the nascent Sunday-school movement to spread revolutionary ideas among the common people seeking an elementary education. In fact, he was instrumental in linking the Bekman circle with this movement through his close acquaintance with the originator of the Sunday-school idea, the Kiev professor and historian Platon Pavlov. In what was essentially a marriage of convenience, Portugalov and his Kharkov companions, including Zelenskii and three other Jewish students, volunteered to put Platon's idea into practice by organizing the first free literary schools for the poor and uneducated.⁴⁵ But alas, before they had any opportunity to turn these schools into revolutionary cells, their Kharkov past caught up with them.

Due to their previous clandestine activity, they were arrested in February 1860. In all twenty-two people were seized and imprisoned for belonging to the Kharkov–Kiev Bekman group. Among them were Portugalov, Zelenskii, and their three Jewish comrades.⁴⁶

After several months of prison in St Petersburg's notorious Peter and Paul Fortress, the five were released and – cured of their revolutionary infatuation – returned to their original endeavour: studying for a diploma. Portugalov, though, retained his commitment to serve 'the people', albeit in a legal fashion. Completing his medical degree in 1862, he made himself a name as Russia's foremost humanist physician by working among the urban and rural poor and campaigning for social health care and public hygiene.

But Portugalov's dedication to improve the lot of the Russian people was matched by an equally strong commitment to the cause of Jewish enlightenment and emancipation. Though a gadfly to the Jewish community because of his radical views on religious reform and his constant reminders that the rich and powerful ought to spend more on the education of the 'children of Israel', he was admired for his denunciation of Judeophobic sentiments aired in the Russian press, particularly by its Slavophil publicists.⁴⁷ In true maskilic style he refuted antisemitic clichés, fought for Jewish emancipation, and all along proved his civic virtues as a 'legal populist'. This, and the fact that he was constantly harassed by the authorities, endeared him to progressive Jews and Russians alike and, perhaps most significantly, made him a role-model for Jewish nihilist youths who sought to follow 'the example of the extremely popular ... *zemskii* doctor Portugalov'.⁴⁸

Besides Portugalov and Zelenskii, other noteworthy Jewish participants in the revolutionary movement of the nihilist period were Nikolai Utin and the Bakst brothers who became active in Zemlia i Volia. Like

other Jewish radicals, they belonged to the aspiring *diplomirte yidishe inteligenz*. This was particularly true of Vladimir (1835–74) and Osip Ignatevich Bakst (1835–95). They received their education at the Zhitomir Rabbinical Seminary. Their father, a well-known *maskil*, was one of its outstanding teachers. Subsequently, they both graduated with a masters degree (*stepen' kandidata*) from the University of St Petersburg. But their university years also 'schooled' them in radical political ideas which, as was also the case with Utin, motivated them to join Zemlia i Volia.⁴⁹

Nikolai Isaakovich Utin (1845–83) differed from the Bakst brothers in that he came from an extremely rich assimilationist St Petersburg merchant family. Baptized in childhood along with his four older brothers, he received an excellent education and, while still in his mid-teens, entered St Petersburg University. Precocious, brilliant, and ambitious, he looked forward to an academic career. Side-tracked by radical student life, however, he applied his extraordinary talents to campaign against the implementation of the tsarist government's new university regulations of 1861, which were intended to curb nihilist inspired student radicalism by restricting enrolment of unruly, indigent *raznochintsy* elements, banning unauthorized student assemblies (*skhodki*), and placing student self-help societies under strict supervision. But what started out as a protest against the infringement of independent student corporate life soon developed into street demonstrations for political liberty and social justice.

Utin played a conspicuous part in the politicization of the student movement. Together with his comrade-in-arms E. P. Mikhaelis, he 'injected the larger political and social issues of the day into the protest'.⁵⁰ The high profile of Utin as an advocate of 'politics' among the discontented students was given expression by the fact that his following was called 'Utin's party'. This 'party' was responsible for circulating numerous proclamations and manifestos of decidedly revolutionary character, some of which were apparently printed by Osip Bakst who was a popular publisher in his own right. Agitated by these inflammatory leaflets, as well as the fiery speeches of Utin, the students took to the streets on 26 and 27 September. Here they were met by tsarist troops and police who arrested almost 300 protesters, including Utin and his brother Evgenii (1843–94), who together with still another 6 Jews were very active in the student movement.⁵¹

For Utin this was the beginning of a revolutionary career which lasted for twelve years. Having spent a month in the dreaded Peter and Paul Fortress, he linked up with Zemlia i Volia, bringing with him many of his fellow students who, like him, had experienced the revolutionary

excitement – and ‘martyrdom’ – of opposing a government which seemed to be determined to return to pre-1855 regimentation. Thus, in the spring of 1862 we find him already in the ranks of Zemlia i Volia as its most dynamic young leader.

Nikolai Utin’s and the Bakst brothers’ participation in the Society of Land and Freedom typifies *par excellence* what was to become the characteristic preoccupation of Jews in the Russian revolutionary movement. Utin was Zemlia i Volia’s foremost organizing talent who, after the arrest of its founder Nikolas Serno, joined its ‘Central Committee’ in July 1862 and became one of the society’s leading activists. Less prominent, but nonetheless important, was the role of Vladimir and Osip Bakst. Vladimir was among the first to join up with Serno’s original Zemlia i Volia group when it was founded in the autumn of 1861. His principal task was to maintain communications with revolutionary *émigrés* in London and elsewhere in Europe. Going abroad for this purpose, he also organized the transport of illegal literature from London and, moving to Berne in autumn 1862, founded a printing press which, according to Franco Venturi, ‘eventually became one of the main centres of propaganda for Russia’.⁵²

Around the same time another press was secretly constructed in Russia itself under the supervision of Utin and the technical and material assistance of Vladimir’s younger brother Osip. Although this was not the first clandestine press in Russia, it certainly was one of the most long-lasting, sophisticated, and productive machines built so far in the revolutionary underground.⁵³ It was a feat that was not, in fact, repeated until another enterprising Jewish revolutionary created an even more impressive printing establishment for the second Zemlia i Volia organization of the 1870s. As for the first Zemlia i Volia, its ‘Jewish trio’ was indeed protogenic for the role of Jews as *organizers* and *technicians* of the Russian revolution.

In the person of Nikolai Utin the above qualities were most explicitly matched with yet another Jewish tendency in the Russian revolutionary movement: namely, to think and act in pragmatic, often moderate, political terms. Utin’s early agitation in the student movement and his preoccupation with organization was already indicative of his practical and political bent in Zemlia i Volia. It was almost with regret that one of his closest associates stated that ‘the orientation of Utin was purely political’ and that, as such, he was little concerned with pressing ‘socio-economic questions’ and their ultimate revolutionary solution.⁵⁴ Instead, he applied himself to the immediate tasks of strengthening Zemlia i Volia organizationally and of mobilizing ‘public opinion’ in support of its fight against the government. It was for the latter purpose that he created the

aforesaid printing press to publish *Zemlia i Volia* proclamations and brochures, the first item of which – an appeal to the ‘educated classes’ – was written by Utin himself.⁵⁵

As *Zemlia i Volia*’s *homo politicus*, Utin was also one of the society’s two principal representatives for negotiating close cooperation with the Polish insurrectionists in the winter of 1862/63. It was this Polish connection which, in addition to his illegal publishing activity, almost led to Utin’s arrest in May 1863 and possible execution by shooting to which he was sentenced *in absentia* on 27 November 1865. Fortunately, Utin noticed in time that the police were closing in on him and escaped to London several days before he was meant to be captured.

Nikolai Utin’s departure from Russia ended the first, largely ephemeral, stint of Jewish participation in the post-Decembrist revolutionary movement. Other than Utin and Vladimir Bakst who remained abroad, all Jewish activists of the late 1850s and early 1860s returned to their university studies or professional careers. Only one Jew, Meier (Mir) Levental, has been linked to revolutionary activity in Russia between 1864 and 1868. Levental, an apprentice at the St Petersburg Technological Institute, was arrested in May 1866 for having had close contacts with Ivan A. Khudiakov’s conspiratorial circle which was associated with the Moscow *Ishutintsy* and implicated in the Karakazov affair.⁵⁶ But except for this isolated instance of what can be viewed as the first case of a Jewish worker in the Russian revolutionary movement, there was no Jew among the ultra-radical epigones of *Zemlia i Volia*. It was not until 1868–69 when a new wave of student disorder erupted in St Petersburg and Moscow that Jewish radical involvement made itself again noticeable and, in fact, became the take-off point for a sustained and substantial participation in Russian revolutionary activity.

The small number of revolutionary Jews prior to 1868 and their conspicuous absence from the conspiracies of the mid-1860s can be attributed to two reasons. First, there was as yet no large representation of Jews in post-secondary institutions, the principle breeding-ground of revolution. The vast majority of maskilic Jewish youth was still in the process of assimilating Russian culture and preparing themselves to enter Russian schools. In the meantime, they pursued their own uniquely Jewish goal of *Haskalah* and spiritual self-emancipation. For them nihilism was a cultural experience which, while contributing to their radicalization within a traditional Jewish setting, was devoid of direct or immediate revolutionary implications. This benign maskilic-nihilist disposition ties in with the second reason for their lack of participation: being less radical than their Russian counterparts, Jewish nihilists were reluctant to get involved with ultra-revolutionary groups such as the

Ishutin-Karakazovtsy. Their reading of nihilist literature, and general preference for Pisarev's 'egoistic rationalism', did not transform them into *Ishutintsy* whose murderous hatred for Alexander II led to Karakazov's assassination attempt – after all, was it not the 'Tsar-Liberator' who had unlocked the doors to their education and professional advancement! Even the handful of Jewish students who for a short while succumbed to the siren-call of revolution were relatively moderate in their political determination to replace Russian autocracy with Western liberties. Indeed, their most illustrious representative – Nikolai Utin – completely rejected Ishutin's Hell and, while in exile, fought actively against this extremist, terrorist current which was ideologically sanctioned by Michael Bakunin and ruthlessly practised by Sergei Nechaev in 1868–70.

The Utin-Bakunin confrontation, and the general tendency of Jews to steer clear of extremist nihilism, brings to the fore the basic question: the *Jewishness* of the Russian-Jewish revolutionary. Did the fact that he was a Jew by birth and upbringing, and being recognized as such by non-Jews, have any bearing on his motives in becoming a revolutionary and in taking a particular position with respect to revolutionary goals and activities? And if so, did he have a 'Jewish' influence on the ideology and politics of nineteenth-century revolutionary Russia? Utin's opposition to Bakunin, and also Grigorii Peretts' distinct position in the Decembrist movement, are pointers for answering these questions which guide the investigation of this study.

In opposing Bakunin, Utin was the first Russian revolutionary Jew to respond negatively to Bakunin's anarchist Populism and its social-revolutionary maximalism which, as practised by Nechaev, spelled the end of nihilism in Russia at the end of the 1860s. The conflict between the two occurred in the context of European socialist politics. For it was as an ally of Karl Marx that Utin fought against Bakunin's leadership of Russian radicalism abroad and that he exposed Bakunin's anti-democratic manipulations to gain control of the Marxian First International. Successful on both accounts, he reduced Bakunin's influence among Russian *émigré* radicals and contributed to his expulsion from the International. Though vanity and political ambition were part of his anti-Bakunin campaign, Utin's fight was motivated by a genuine desire to defend Western socialist and democratic principles against the Russian anarchism of Bakunin.⁵⁷

Utin's alliance with Marx rested on his identification with the latter's appreciation of the importance of 'bourgeois liberties' and 'democratic politics' – and political power *per se* – for the realization of socialist ends.

Hence his opposition to Bakunin, who rejected these ‘decadent’ Western values as impediments to real social revolution and denounced the ‘politics’ of Marx, and social democracy in general, as ‘bourgeois socialism’.⁵⁸

The ideo-political outlook of Utin was, quite obviously, oriented on Western Europe. His ‘Marxism’ clearly contrasted with Bakunin’s ‘Populism’, which derived from Russian sources. But what does this tell us about the ‘Jewishness’ of Utin and other Jewish revolutionaries whose ‘moderation’ militated against extremist radicalism? A preliminary answer, to be further explored as we proceed beyond the 1860s, may be found in the Decembrist story of Grigorii Peretts.

Interpreting the Jewishness of Peretts and its influence on his thinking and revolutionary engagement, we must recognize its maskilic characteristics. For it was as a Jew whose identity was shaped by the Haskalah that he joined the Decembrist movement and chose to identify himself with its most moderate, reform-minded, group – the ‘pure constitutionalists’. Hence, unlike them (and the Decembrists in general), he was not a product of the indigenous Russian liberal tradition and its radicalization in the wake of the Napoleonic ‘War of Liberation’ which had promised civil emancipation and constitutional government. His commitment to these goals was rooted in a different tradition and experience: namely, the Mendelssohnian Enlightenment and his father’s futile politics of emancipation.⁵⁹ It was from within this Jewish context that Grigorii Peretts arrived in the Decembrist movement and that, moreover, he rejected its republican aspirations and Russian Jacobinism. Cultural enlightenment and *Rechtstaat* philosophy in the German sense rather than revolution and republicanism in the Franco-American sense were the basic motifs which determined Peretts’ Decembrist engagement. In this Peretts prefigured the German cultural orientation and socio-political evolution of subsequent Jewish revolutionaries who, like Utin and his fellow student radicals, did not share the indigenous Russian extremism of Bakunin’s anarchism and Ishutin’s ‘hellish’ organization.

The connection between the Jewishness of the Jewish revolutionary and his German-European orientation was inadvertently made also by Bakunin in his antisemitic outburst against his ‘enemies’: the ‘dictator-messiah Marx’ and his ‘army of German Jews’ with the ‘little Russian Jew Utin’ in the lead. The enemy camp was commanded by ‘German leaders, for the most part Jews, that is exploiters and bourgeoisie by instinct, including the school of Marx’.⁶⁰ Giving free reign to his Judeophobic and anti-German sentiments, Bakunin rolled Jews and Germans into one as the enemy of freedom loving, instinctively socialist,

Latin and Slavic people. In sum, Bakunin located the Jews in the 'Marxist camp' of European socialism as opposed to his own 'Populist camp', and he located them there because of their Jewishness.

The fact that Bakunin defined 'Jewishness' in terms of antisemitic clichés, whereby Jews *qua* Marxists were in league with the Rothschilds to seize the bourgeois state to serve Jewish interests, should not blind us to the underlying truth of his observation that Jews, though for reasons other than his own, were particularly attracted to 'western-bourgeois' forms of socialism prevalent in Germany. Bakunin's antisemitism reached its ultimate pitch because the Russian Jew Utin represented an 'alien' influence that subverted his new Populist message to the Russian youth with 'Marxist' conceptions of socialism. Thus at the very inception of revolutionary Populism, which was to dominate Russian radical politics into the 1890s,⁶¹ Jews were perceived as a Western, cosmopolitan element tied to a German rather than Russian socialist tradition.

Of course, it is only prudent to recognize that Bakunin did not speak for the Russian revolutionary movement, nor was he the only spokesman of Russian Populism in which he was rivalled by Peter Lavrov who shared none of his antisemitic phobias. But his pronouncements bring into focus the *problematika* of Jewish participation in a movement which, unlike nihilism, prided itself on being uniquely Russian.

The relationship between the 'Jewishness' of Jewish revolutionaries and the 'Russianness' of Russian Populism, and whether Bakunin's antisemitism entered into it, will emerge more clearly as the story unfolds in these pages. For now let us simply note that in spite of the dilemma Populism entailed for Jews, it did not reduce their role in the Russian revolutionary movement. On the contrary, it produced a creative tension which enhanced their role as *Jewish* Populists. This, as we shall see in chapter 2, had happened already at the very beginning of revolutionary Populism in Russia. For while 'the little Russian Jew' Utin challenged Bakunin in Switzerland, another Jewish radical confronted his protégé Nechaev in St Petersburg.

Part 1

The Chaikovskii circles: Jewish radicals in the formative stage of revolutionary Populism, 1868–1875

In the history of the Russian revolutionary movement the years 1868–70 are primarily known for what came to be called *Nechaevshchina*. The term, of course, refers to the activity of Sergei Nechaev who tried to create a closely knit and hierarchically organized conspiratorial society whose task it was to initiate and guide a popular revolutionary upheaval. Convinced that ‘there are many people to take Karakazov’s place’, Nechaev made it his mission to continue the revolutionary struggle in the spirit of Ishutin’s Organization. He was, Franco Venturi writes, ‘the very embodiment of violence ... [who] developed the feelings and ideas of *Hell* with a ruthlessness unique among the revolutionaries of the sixties’.¹ Practising what he preached in his ‘Catechism of the Revolutionary’, jointly composed with Bakunin, Nechaev resorted to blackmail, deception, manipulation, mystification, and cold-blooded murder – all in the name of the ‘people’s revenge’.

The ends that were to justify these means were, to Nechaev, self-evident. Revolution was imminent, but its ultimate socialist victory depended on his ability to marshal as quickly as possible all forces of destruction. According to Nechaev’s timetable, the great apocalypse would occur soon after 19 February 1870, when the peasants would rise *en masse* in revolt against the final implementation of the ‘fraudulent’ land settlement of the 1861 emancipation edicts.

The setting in which Nechaev unfolded his brand of revolutionary action was the student community of St Petersburg. Smouldering with discontent, it seemed to be fertile soil for planting his ideas. And plant them he did. But the reaping was not to his liking. For even though the agitation of his followers, the Nechaevtsy, contributed greatly towards the radicalization of the students and helped to sensitize them politically, it neither increased Nechaev’s following significantly nor did it lead to the creation of a far-flung network of ultra-revolutionary cells. Instead, it elicited a negative response from the vast majority of students and induced the more radically inclined to search for alternative forms of dissent. This led to the formation of the Chaikovskii circle which marked

the beginning of what has been aptly called ‘the real “springtime” of the [Populist] movement’.²

This crucial preparatory stage of Populist radicalism marked also the beginning of a constant flow of Jews into the ever widening current of the Russian revolutionary movement. Their participation in it, and more specifically their role in the formation and development of Populist circles, is the principal topic of this section. Concentrating on the most important radical society of the early 1870s – the St Petersburg Chaikovskii circle and its affiliates in Moscow, Odessa, Kiev, and Vilna – its chapters detail the entry, activity, and contribution of Jews in Populist revolutionary socialism.

2 Jewish student activists in St Petersburg

St Petersburg in 1868–69 presented Sergei Nechaev with an ideal opportunity to organize a following committed to his style of ‘making revolution’. The situation was not unlike 1861–62 when student unrest and government repression invigorated the revolutionary movement in the form of the first Zemlia i Volia. Only this time there would be no period of remission. Tsarist policy and Nechaevist agitation combined in 1868 to produce a student movement whose revolutionary potential was to destabilize tsarist Russia for the next fifteen years.

Again, as in 1861, the process of student radicalization was touched off by the authorities’ desire to curb nihilist inspired student activism. In taking a reactionary course after the 1866 Karakazov affair, the government established a new, extremely conservative regime in higher education which imposed a strict system of surveillance (*nadzor*) over students in secondary and post-secondary institutions. The architect of this system of policing education, Dmitrii Tolstoy, proceeded in 1867 to put in place a set of regulations designed to suppress independent student activity. Besides reinforcing previous restrictions on unauthorized student assemblies and self-help societies, these regulations imposed additional controls by instructing university authorities and police to cooperate in identifying ‘student delinquents’ and reporting ‘about all activities raising doubt about the moral and political reliability of students’.¹

The students responded by calling agitational meetings (*skhodki*) in defence of their ‘rights’ to conduct their own affairs as they saw fit. Although at first united in their fight against the new regulations, it soon became apparent that a radical minority sought to politicize the student movement by organizing large-scale *skhodki* which were bound to produce confrontations between the students and the authorities. Needless to say, Nechaev, who himself was a part-time student at St Petersburg University, frequented these meetings to further his own revolutionary goals. As things developed through the autumn and winter of 1868–69, he seemed to be nearing his cherished objective. The already

escalating student unrest, which was centred on the St Petersburg Medical-Surgical Academy, flared up into militant demonstrations in the spring of 1869 and hence spread to other institutions of higher learning.

The most important Jewish activists at the Academy were Solomon Leizerovich Chudnovskii (1850–1912) and Mark Andreevich Natanson (1850–1919). Both were first-year students who in 1868 had been attracted to St Petersburg as a centre of learning. But instead of academic pursuits they quickly became absorbed in extra-curricular activities: Natanson was instrumental in setting up an ‘autonomous student library’ which developed into a ‘club’ for radical students; Chudnovskii frequented the meetings of students who wanted to transform the ‘bread and butter issues’ of student discontent into questions of much wider and deeper social significance.

These activities took a more serious turn in March 1869 when the students rallied to the defence of a fellow student who had been refused enrolment in a subsequent course because his exam papers had been lost by a professor. Together with other students Chudnovskii organized large protest meetings. At one of these gatherings it was decided to send a delegation to the Academy’s inspector requesting that he appear before them to explain the administration’s refusal to rectify the injustice done to one of their comrades. In consequence the hard core of student activists, including Chudnovskii and Natanson, were arrested. Both were expelled from the Academy, with Natanson being imprisoned for six weeks and Chudnovskii being exiled to his home district of Kherson. This, however, was only the beginning of their revolutionary careers. As we shall see, Natanson remained in the midst of St Petersburg student activism and Chudnovskii used his domiciliary exile to lay the foundation of the Kherson–Odessa circle of Chaikovtsy.

The heavy-handed police intervention at the academy induced the students of the university and the Technological Institute to demonstrate immediately in support of the ‘medics’ and for the cause of student rights in general. This show of solidarity was initiated and coordinated by the students of the Institute whose ringleader was Lazar Borisovich Goldenberg-Getroitman (1846–1916). With an obvious sense of pride, Goldenberg noticed that, unlike the Poles, all the Jewish students took part in the demonstration. Following this event Goldenberg was chosen by the technology students to head a delegation to negotiate with the director of the Institute terms for greater student liberties, including the right to hold student meetings and to create mutual assistance funds free of police supervision. But instead of succeeding in their demands, Goldenberg and his friends were promptly arrested and subsequently exiled to the provinces of the interior.²

There were also some Jewish students at the university who followed Goldenberg's call to demonstrate. But unlike their co-religionists at the Academy and the Institute, they did not cut as prominent a profile. Still, two of them – Aaron Bomash (1845–?) and Lazar Shapiro (1845–1906) – were fairly active and, like Natanson, Chudnovskii, and Goldenberg, belonged to the 'radicals' of the movement. In fact, Shapiro is known to have propagated Nechaev's ultra-revolutionary views, which puts him squarely among the extremists on the radical wing of the student movement.³ But in this he was rather an exception to the rule since Jewish students in general responded negatively to Nechaev. However, actual opposition to Nechaev seems to have grown only gradually, and out of closer acquaintance with his personality and methods of recruitment.

A good illustration of this process is Mark Natanson.⁴ His case is also the most significant – and historically most important – instance of how a Jewish radical was funnelled into the revolutionary movement via student activism, Nechaevist agitation, and government persecution. For, he emerged from this three-fold process as the originator of the Chaikovskii circle.

According to his autobiographical sketch, Mark Natanson arrived in St Petersburg in August 1868 and enrolled at the Academy. Natanson's initial impression was somewhat disappointing. As he put it laconically, instead of meeting the sort of students he had thought of as 'ideal people', he 'found... cards, wine and women'.⁵ His own ideals led him into a different direction, namely, to study seriously and to be active in student affairs.

Student life completely absorbed Natanson for the next few months. He seems to have been able to strike a perfect balance between his 'passion for learning' and his desire to fulfil what he considered the extra-curricular obligations or, as it were, civic duties of a student. Being respected and liked by his fellow freshmen, they elected him to be their spokesman (*starosta*) in dealings with the academic and administrative staff of the Academy. Moreover, he was also chosen as one of their 'library representatives' responsible for setting up and managing a student-operated library.⁶ As subsequent events were to show, the students had elected a person of outstanding qualities in leadership and organization.

In his role as a *starosta* and 'librarian' Natanson was bound to be thrust into the forefront of student activism. The quasi-autonomous student library at the Academy served as a convenient meeting place for students eager to discuss the burning political and ideological issues of

the day. In the words of one contemporary, these gatherings turned the library into an 'open political forum' known as the Academy's 'Jacobin Club'.⁷

A by-product of these discussions was Natanson's creation of a 'sub-library of revolutionary-socialist literature' to meet the ever growing need of students like himself to acquire more knowledge about socialist ideas and revolutionary history.⁸ It is worth emphasizing that the establishment of the library was characteristic for Natanson's approach to come to terms with contemporary radical thought which, although it attracted him, he was not able to accept *prima facie*. In this particular instance, he was responding to the agitation of Nechaev whom he had met repeatedly in the winter of 1868/69.

Judging from Natanson's own biographical notes, it is obvious that their first encounters took place at the end of December 1868, and that their first disagreements emerged already during one of these initial meetings. Although Natanson does not elaborate on the nature of his conflict with Nechaev, we may safely assume that it had to do with the latter's attempt to radicalize the student movement in preparation for the expected revolutionary upheaval. Natanson was too committed to a moderate and law-abiding approach in student affairs to be easily swayed by Nechaev's uncompromising radicalism. Yet, in the very process of opposing Nechaev, Natanson himself was gradually sucked into the revolutionary current.

That he got so close to it in the first place is a good indication of the attraction which 'progressive' ideas held for him, especially when put to him by a charismatic personality like Nechaev. Had it not been for Nechaev it is quite possible that he might have adopted a liberal-constitutional approach as the most appropriate avenue for solving Russia's social and political problems.⁹ But the Nechaevist challenge cut short the evolution towards such an alternative since it forced him to reconsider his own priorities – academic or revolutionary commitment – in the light of Nechaev's claim that the peasantry was ready to rebel, and that therefore it was necessary to mobilize the intelligentsia to ensure the people's victory.

In a sense, Natanson personifies the ambivalent radicalism prevalent among many of his fellow students who, while lending a sympathetic ear to the agitational speeches of the Nechaevtsy, were not ready to follow blindly in Nechaev's footsteps. Beyond their general dissatisfaction with the status quo and their nebulous ideas of socialism, they simply did not know enough about the object and nature of revolutionary practice. Hence, their need to inform themselves which was served so well by Natanson's 'revolutionary-socialist library'.

The founding of the library was only a first step in this self-educational endeavour. Under the pressure of Nechaevist agitation, Natanson soon felt compelled to come to terms with Nechaev's basic argument: namely, that with the final implementation of emancipation on 19 February 1870, the peasants would rise in revolt against the settlement of 1861. They would finally recognize that they had been cheated out of *their* land and, therefore, would vent their anger against the gentry and the tsar – in short, the peasants were poised for revolution, for *buntarstvo*. Being extremely sceptical that this would be the case, Natanson formed a circle whose task was to assess the 'condition of life and mood of the people' in the countryside.¹⁰ This, it was hoped, would provide a sound basis for judging the merits of Nechaev's programme of action.

The project, as envisaged by Natanson, was essentially a fact-finding mission. Students were encouraged to use their summer vacation to conduct field research in order to gather information on whether the peasants were indeed ready to revolt. In an effort to streamline the investigation, Natanson and his supporters drew up questionnaires to aid the 'researchers' in seeking out relevant data for their inquiry. Judging by the ease with which Natanson was able to implement his 'programme of research', it must have been popular with a large number of students. So much so, it seems, that many who had previously cast their lot with Nechaev now began to abandon him.¹¹

The success of Natanson's circle in attracting a large following was perhaps facilitated rather than hampered by the arrest and six-week imprisonment of its members, including Natanson, for taking part in disturbances at the Academy in March 1869. This brought them into close contact with students from the University and the Technological Institute who shared their fate, and who were eager to exchange opinions. For the Natansonovtsy – as they came to be called – this was an excellent opportunity to make their views known to a relatively large audience representing the most 'serious' and 'progressive' elements of the St Petersburg student body. Apparently, they made good use of it. Arguing against moderate constitutionalists and ultra-radical Nechaevists, they convinced the majority to support their platform of a pragmatic radicalism which earned them the not inappropriate designation of *issledovатели* (researchers) and *sotsialisty-narodniki*. Consequently, within a very short time of their release from prison, Natanson's 'central group' managed to organize some 25 circles of up to 250 people who were prepared to carry out the task of 'researching' the peasantry. With this in mind they departed to their respective localities (usually coinciding with their native place of residence) and agreed to meet again in the autumn to discuss their findings with the Nechaevtsy.¹²

In anticipation of this new round of discussions Natanson and his closest collaborator, V. M. Aleksandrov, rented a two-storey house on Vulfovskaiia street, which was to serve both as live-in headquarters for their circle and as a common meeting place for other radical groupings in St Petersburg. Because of its communal nature the Natanson–Aleksandrov habitat soon came to be known as the *Vulfovskaiia kommuna*. Its popularity as a centre of communal student life, radical discourse, and ‘self-education’ has been vividly described by several contemporaries who were closely acquainted with its activity.¹³ Within a year or so of its existence it was referred to as the ‘mother’ of similar communes which had sprung up in the meantime. Yet, even though the commune is remembered for its exemplary role in promoting student ‘self-education’ and ‘mutual assistance’, its primary function was – as intended by Natanson – to provide a congenial setting for conducting ‘evening seminars’ dealing with issues raised by Nechaev’s theory and practice of revolutionary struggle.

Natanson’s autobiographical conspectus gives a good indication of the nature of controversy between the principal protagonists at the *Vulfovskaiia kommuna*. As was to be expected, the discussions were dominated by the Nechaevtsy and anti-Nechaevtsy, with each side trying to prove their respective point of view. The Nechaevtsy argued their old line that the peasantry was in dire straits, and was therefore ready to rise against that ‘scoundrel’ who wrote ‘the statutes of 1861’.¹⁴ Equipped with data gathered by their researchers, the Natansonovtsy vigorously denied these assertions and proceeded to put forth their own ideas of how to be active on behalf of the people who clearly were not in a state of rebellion. David Markovich Gertsenshtein (1848–1916), a Jewish member of the Natanson circle, no doubt expressed the generally held view of his comrades when he suggested that ‘it is possible to help the suffering people only by spreading education, [and] that for this purpose circles were already being formed occupying themselves with the distribution of books in urban and rural districts’. This was to be coupled with a renewed effort to use the summer break for studying the peasants’ conditions and attitudes.¹⁵

Nechaev did not take kindly to his opponents’ criticism and alternative methods of revolutionary engagement, which threatened to undermine his credibility. In fact, the debates at the *Vulfovskaiia kommuna* had resulted in the ‘victory of the [future] Chaikovtsy’.¹⁶ Whatever the precise circumstances may have been, there can be no doubt that in the end Nechaev was the loser as more and more students began to identify themselves with the philosophy of ‘self-education’ and ‘research’ as practised and propagated by the Natanson circle.

This led to a further deterioration of the Natanson–Nechaev relationship which soon turned into one of mutual distrust and re-crimination. Nechaev, in his own unique way, added fuel to the conflict by his undisguised threat that for the sake of the cause he was prepared to denounce his opponents to the police if they refused to accept his line of argument. The level of hostility finally reached such proportions that, according to Natanson, ‘a final break with the Nechaevtsy’ had become inevitable by the end of November 1869.¹⁷ Thus, rejected by the St Petersburg radicals and hunted by the tsarist police, Nechaev abandoned the capital in early December, realizing that he had been outmanoeuvred by the Natansonovtsy.

Totally frustrated, Nechaev made his threat come true. He compromised his principal opponents by using them as ploys for misleading the police in its search for Nechaevtsy still at large in Russia. This, promptly, led to the arrest of Natanson and Aleksandrov, and their detention at the Peter and Paul Fortress for two weeks in January–February 1870. Natanson’s immediate reaction was to expose the underhanded, if not criminal, activity of Nechaev against himself and his friends. ‘I had no mercy for him’, he told Osip Aptekman several years later: ‘I testified [at the interrogation] all that he had done to me from behind ... On account of this, I revealed his harmful malicious agitation.’¹⁸

Retrospectively, though, Natanson was willing to admit that Nechaev’s blackmail tactics contributed to his own revolutionary engagement. Speaking to a gathering of fellow Socialist Revolutionaries in 1905, he put the case thus: by exposing his opponents to prosecution, which would stigmatize them as ‘politically unreliable’, Nechaev started that vicious circle of prison and exile that turned the ‘better ones’ among them into ‘real revolutionaries’. Hence, he told them: ‘If I had reasons to be displeased with Nechaev because of my arrest, it [now] consciously causes me to be eternally grateful to him that it finally set me upon the revolutionary avenue.’¹⁹

This was a striking confession, indeed, by a man who is known in the annals of Russian revolutionary history as the most formidable opponent of Nechaev. For it was Natanson who ensured that Nechaev’s ‘agitational methods’ backfired in every respect and made *Nechaevshchina* a household word among the radicals. Instead of adopting his revolutionary style, they accepted Natanson’s, and thus: instead of ‘going illegal’, they strove to act within legal confines; instead of ‘going to the people’, they went to the intelligentsia; instead of distributing explosives, they disseminated books; and, finally, instead of discounting education, they created a network of ‘self-educational’ circles dedicated to raise the moral and intellectual standards of Russia’s radical youth.

The antithetical nature of the anti-Nechaevist movement found its most elaborate expression in the Natanson 'Programme for Circles of Self-education and Practical Activity'. Formulated some time in 1870, this document was the Natansonovtsy's – or, as they came to be known in 1871–72, the Chaikovtsy's – answer to *Nechaevshchina* and, as such, has also been considered the first programmatic statement of revolutionary Populism.²⁰ In contrast to the Bakuninist declarations of Nechaev, Natanson and his comrades invoked Lavrov's 'formula of progress': namely, that the 'goal of society's progressive movement consists of the development of the individual in physical, intellectual, and moral terms – the personification of truth and justice in social forms'. But, ideology aside, the programme was essentially a description and prescription of the practical preparatory activity which the Natansonovtsy had evolved in the course of their conflict with the Nechaevtsy in 1868–69. It called for the recruitment and training of future revolutionary cadres from among the 'educated and semi-educated classes' by means of organizing 'self-educational' and 'territorial' circles. These were meant to attract potential recruits, especially students, and prepare them for a revolutionary career. Having graduated from the 'territorial' circles, the freshman activist would enter the next, more advanced, phase of preparatory work. He would now join the ranks of committed revolutionaries, the so-called 'critically thinking individuals', and participate in their circles of 'self-education and practical activity'.²¹

Before discussing the implementation of the programme's philosophy of preparatory activity, let us reflect on its political and ideological content in order to raise the highly pertinent question of whether the Jewish background of its author was a factor in its formulation and subsequent influence on the Chaikovtsy. As far as ideology is concerned there can be no doubt that, together with the vast majority of his radical contemporaries, Natanson was strongly affected by Peter Lavrov's *Historical Letters*, which were serialized in a St Petersburg weekly in 1868–69. They enabled him to come to terms with Nechaevism and to formulate a programme of his own. Its ideological rationale was Lavrov's principal idea that it is the moral duty of the educated, privileged individual to dedicate himself to the betterment of society; and that progress depended on the collective action of 'critically thinking individuals'.²² But, as I shall argue later on, in accepting this 'formula of progress' as given, Natanson proceeded in his own unique fashion to interpret its practical application and political implications.

It has always been some sort of enigma to historians that the programme of Natanson, the first written brief of revolutionary Popu-

lism, is a peculiar document for its time in that, paradoxically, it is not Populist in the usual sense of the term as it was understood in the 1870s and generally perceived in the literature thereafter. In contrast to the cardinal belief of Populists that the aim of their activity must be to 'go to the people', to mobilize them for a social revolution – the *sine qua non* of their socialist *Weltanschauung* – and that any deviation from this path of salvation smacks of bourgeois politics, the programme advocates 'political liberty' and the formation of an inherently political 'party of struggle'. Moreover, this *party* would be based not on a supposedly socialistically inclined peasantry, but, on the contrary, on the 'educated and semi-educated classes' (students, professionals, and urban workers) as conscious agents of revolution. Consequently, instead of encouraging revolutionary activists to work among 'the people', to arouse the peasantry, the programme insists that they go to the intelligentsia and, to a lesser degree, to the relatively more educated workers in order to inculcate them with socialist values and, in the process, create conditions for the realization of a 'true' and 'just' society.²³

The degree to which the programme is political, rather than apolitical Populist, in conception is strikingly evident in Natanson's reasoning that social revolution is presently not feasible. Consequently, in the meantime, revolutionary work must be politically oriented since, in any case, the forces of 'progress' are bound to clash with the forces of 'reaction'. It is on the basis of his own preparatory demands that Natanson demonstrates the logic of why this is the case, thus emphasizing the political nature of his programme.

Quite simply, there is no doubt in his mind that even the attempt to practise 'self-education' would inevitably bring the activists in conflict with the autocratic state. For him 'self-education' is a political act *sui generis* and has to be recognized as such in organizing circles dedicated to this task. Hence, he fully accepts the political implication of 'self-education' and, in fact, integrates its various requirements (formation of circles, procurement of books, creation of libraries) as necessary elements for 'organizing a party of struggle'.²⁴

In this scheme of things 'practical activity' amounts to much more than 'self-education' for the sake of creating a social-revolutionary consciousness. It is also an activity which by its very nature transforms 'individual efforts' into 'collective action' and which, as such, provides the only guarantee of resisting the 'still powerful' government. To Natanson, the equation is simple and its logic compelling: '... the enemy is strong, consequently, we need strength; the enemy is organized, consequently, we also need an organized force'. Thus, as seen by Natanson, the attempt to create the preconditions for a socialist society

conflicts directly with the political reality of the autocratic state. It implies a direct confrontation between the guardians of the status quo and the exponents of progress. Sooner or later, he explains, 'this circumstance will, *nolens volens*, direct most of us to struggle with this force, to juxtapose this force with another force ... [which] will be *our party*'.²⁵

A social revolution *à la* Lavrov, 'a fundamental change of the whole structure of the state', remains of course, as stated by Natanson, 'the primary goal of all our strivings'.²⁶ But, clearly, in the programme this *maximalist* goal is put aside as an object of serious consideration since, at present, it could not serve as a practical blueprint of revolutionary action. By setting forth his reasons why in Russia *minimalist* preparatory rather than *maximalist* socialist objectives had to be pursued, Natanson delivered a programme that reads more like a political than a social-revolutionary manifesto. Thus, the manner in which Natanson developed Lavrov's suggestion that a 'revolutionary party' is a necessary prerequisite of the intelligentsia's striving for progress,²⁷ is specifically political in its emphasis on organization and strategy.

Evidently, Natanson thought in terms of a party as a political organization rather than, as was common among Russian radicals, as an amorphous social-revolutionary movement.²⁸ This is indicative of, as I prefer to call it, his *party-political* thinking, which permeates the programme both in its theoretical exposition and practical prescriptions. Hence his political realism and pragmatism in approaching the task of initiating preparatory revolutionary work in an autocratic state, which opposed any, even legal, activity that might undermine its principles of government. It was an approach that quite logically led him to the conclusion that striving for a social revolution meant first and foremost preparing for a political revolution. And this required the formation of an organization fighting for 'political liberty' and the establishment of a 'federal republic' dedicated to 'democratic socialist' ends.²⁹

These atypical Populist aspects of the programme have also been noted by Soviet historians. They rightly indicated that here the future Chaikovtsy, unlike the authors of later programmes, 'recognized the necessity of political struggle', and that, originally, unlike other revolutionary groupings, they 'did not list it as their task to work among the people'.³⁰ In their attempt to account for this apparent contradiction with the principal tenets of Populism, they argued that this was due to the fact that 'the world view of the "propagandists" [Chaikovtsy] was shaped in the transitional period from feudalism to capitalism'. Consequently, the Chaikovskii circle was an 'organization of a transitional type', which, especially in its formative Natansonist period of 1869–71,

combined the contrasting 'old' democratic political ideas of the 1860s with the 'new' Populist ideas of the 1870s.³¹ But such an explanation leaves unanswered the question why this was so in the case of the Chaikovskii circle and not with other revolutionary circles as well. Nor does it explain why the Chaikovtsy's preoccupation with revolutionary ethics and education was not reproduced in the same intensive fashion by other radical circles at that time. In short, this sociological generalization ignores the well-known fact that the Chaikovskii circle was a unique phenomenon and that its original programme was a manifestation of this fact. However, there is a different, much more concrete and rewarding approach towards solving this whole question: namely, to examine the personality of Natanson, who, as the architect of the programme and the originator of the Chaikovskii circle, would appear to have been more than any other single person the source of the uniqueness attributed to the Chaikovtsy.

To begin with, let us pay attention to the following facts: first, among the leading Chaikovtsy and opponents of Nechaev, Natanson was the only person who was neither of gentry nor of Russian background; and, secondly, that only among the Nechaevtsy do we find commoners – the most prominent being of course the *raznochinets* Nechaev himself. Thus socially, Natanson differed from his comrades in that he did not belong to the nobility, and, ethnically, he differed from his opponents in that he was a Jew from the predominantly non-Russian borderlands of the tsarist empire. This raises the crucial question as to what degree and in what sense Natanson's Jewish background might have shaped his perception of the revolutionary process and its historical agents. It would be futile, though, to seek an answer to this question by searching for specifically Jewish interests in Natanson's commitment to, and formulation of, a revolutionary *Weltanschauung*. In other words, Jewishness in Natanson must not be seen as a function of promoting consciously Jewish aspirations, rather it must be comprehended in terms of how ethnicity shaped his theory and practice of revolution. Hence, we must elaborate in some detail the cultural and intellectual heritage which inescapably left its mark on Natanson and see how this heritage entered into his peculiar brand of revolutionary Populism.

Mark Natanson was the son of a well-to-do merchant in the Lithuanian province of Kovno.³² In spite of his family's assimilationist leanings, he most probably received an elementary Jewish education according to the usual custom of attending the local kheder until the age of twelve or thirteen. This would have facilitated the acquisition of rigorous intellectual discipline and pragmatic thinking for which he was known to his contemporaries who referred to his talmudic bend of mind in

retaining encyclopaedic information and approaching any given problem from all possible angles of interpretation. Even his sense of social responsibility and 'striving for moral ideals' has been attributed to his religious upbringing.³³

During Natanson's adolescence these traditional Judaic values were revitalized by the finest representatives of mid-nineteenth-century Lithuanian Jewry, Rabbi Israel Salanter (1810–83) and Rabbi Isaac Elhanan (1817–96). Partly in response to the humanistic challenge of the Haskalah, they originated a religious reform movement known as the *Musar* (moral) School. Both lived in the province of Kovno, Elhanan being in fact a resident of the city of Kovno, the place in which Natanson himself was raised. Growing up under the pervasive influence of their moral teachings of leading a perfect ethical life, exemplified by their compassion for the poor, the young Natanson was willy nilly exposed to the potentially radical values of altruistic Judaic humanism.³⁴ But it was unquestionably the Jewish Enlightenment itself which reinforced in Natanson the 'protestant' reformism of *musar* ideals towards individual moral and ethical rejuvenation and, in time, gave it a secular direction for the eventual absorption of social-revolutionary ideals.

Although Kovno was not known as a Haskalah stronghold, the *maskilim* were very much part of the intellectual landscape of the city. This was the home of the father of modern Hebrew prose, Abraham Mapu, who in his novels strongly defended the virtues of secular knowledge, ethical idealism, and Jewish socio-economic self-improvement. Viciously persecuted by Orthodox fanatics, he was the hero of the local youths who were greatly impressed by his fictional description of the good and evil in Jewish life, and by his portrayal – especially in *The Hypocrite* – of 'all the virtues required for the new type of being, whose very action would be guided by reason'. While it is difficult to ascertain whether Natanson belonged to the 'Mapa', the youthful followers of Mapu, there can be little doubt that he was familiar with the ideas of this maskilic opponent of rabbinical obscurantism.³⁵

All in all, and regardless of his actual degree of formal Jewish education and cultural embeddedness, Natanson was obviously influenced by the reformist ideas and ideals which during the 1860s emanated from the more traditional values of the *musar* school of Judaic Talmudism, on the one hand, and the more radical visions of the Jewish Enlightenment, on the other. Like many Jewish youths of his time, he was sufficiently saturated with an idealist Haskalah glorification of progress through learning and secular knowledge, often combined with an indigenous Jewish sense of philanthropic responsibility and social justice to appreciate the radical interpretation of such values in the writings of

Pisarev and Chernyshevsky which began to penetrate the cities and *shtetlekh* of the Pale in the second half of the 1860s. Thus, it comes as no surprise that Natanson should have been strongly attracted to the 'new enlightenment' in the guise of Russian nihilism.

For Natanson, as for others of his generation, nihilism proved to be an ideology of salvation. Having been sensitized from early on to the discrepancy between the reality and ideals of traditional Jewish society and beginning to lose, if not having already lost, faith in Judaism, he readily identified himself with the sort of 'nihilist personality' that emerged from Chernyshevsky's *What Is to Be Done?* and Pisarev's characterization of Bazarov – a person that would 'help cure society of its moral and physical ills by his exemplary life and useful work' and whose 'rational egoism was really a form of puritanism based upon the discipline of scientific work and a "scientific" ethic'.³⁶

While attending gymnasium, he discovered in the works of these writers a *Weltanschauung* which fully corresponded to his own existential situation. It provided him with an ideal model of how he, as an individual, could effect his own emancipation while, by the same token, contributing to the betterment of society. Hence, following 'the great precepts of his [nihilist] teachers', Natanson – instead of following in the footsteps of his father in pursuit of a commercial career – chose a medical profession, a 'socially useful science'.³⁷

The influence of nihilism and Jewishness in shaping Natanson's personality was also recognized by his contemporaries. Lev Deich and Osip Aptekman imply that, as in their own case, maskilic ideals and nihilist prescriptions contributed to Natanson's radicalization. Others have noted that while Natanson's practical and businesslike approach to revolutionary affairs was due to his upbringing in a Jewish merchant household, his intellectual perseverance bordering on dogmatism derived from his talmudic studies.³⁸

It has also been claimed that the Polish uprising of 1863 left an indelible mark on Natanson, which manifested itself later on in his 'comparatively high level of political maturity' and the fact that his 'revolutionary practice always carried the imprint of a Polish conspiracy'.³⁹ Such a claim is difficult to sustain. For while the Polish revolt and its ruthless suppression may have been a source of growing political awareness, it hardly could have had much of an impact on the intellectual evolution of the only thirteen-year-old Natanson. So, what about his intellectual evolution? How are we to comprehend the manner in which Natanson's Jewish background and, more specifically, *Jewish* appropriation of nihilist thought shaped his political personality as disclosed in his 1870 programme? What, in other words, is the underlying Jewishness

of his revolutionary thinking, and in what sense can it be identified as an integral aspect of his *political* contribution to Russian revolutionary Populism?

The answer becomes apparent when it is realized that Natanson's views, as expressed in his programme, were essentially an amalgamation of nihilist and Populist ideas – an amalgamation, I submit beforehand, that was possible only because of his Jewishness. He was a Populist in so far as he wholeheartedly embraced Lavrov's idealist interpretation of progress in which the 'duty-conscious' intelligentsia was the decisive factor in transforming society. He was nihilist in that he interpreted this cardinal ideological principle of Russian Populism in the spirit of Pisarev, Chernyshevsky, and Dobroliubov. Putting it the other way around, he retained his 'positivist understanding' of auto-emancipation through the acquisition of socially useful knowledge and the rejection of traditionally sanctioned authority while imbuing this utilitarian and critical attitude with a morally determined commitment to social activism.⁴⁰ But for him the latter was not a function of any specific sense of repentance due to the intelligentsia's 'debt to the people'. Unlike his Russian comrades of noble vintage, who 'converted the *Historical Letters* into a populist tract' by interpreting Lavrov's 'secularised version' of moral obligation literally as a call to go and work among the Russian peasantry, Natanson accepted Lavrov's ethically grounded demand for social action merely in the sense of acting on behalf of the impoverished masses in the name of social progress.⁴¹

To Natanson, a Jewish *raznochinets*, the concept of debt in its narrow Populist meaning was at least as alien as it was to his admired nihilist teachers. While citing Lavrov as the ultimate authority on social progress, there is not a word in the programme about 'debt', nor is there any romantic notion about 'the people's' communist authenticity that ought to be emulated by 'submerg[ing] one's identity by living in the villages'.⁴² In fact, only scant attention was paid to the peasantry as a future object of revolutionary propaganda.

Finally, Natanson interpreted Lavrov's notion of a 'party' very much in a nihilist political sense: namely, as an institutionalized expression of 'the tutelary role of the educated elite of the new men' who, as an organized political entity, would struggle for civic liberties in a democratic republic.⁴³ Actually, the term *nihilist-Populism* would be the most appropriate designation for the views of Natanson. For he adopted the idealistic Populist philosophy of the *Historical Letters* as a call to prepare for political action.

That nihilist-Populism rather than Populism pure and simple should have been the result of Natanson's reading of the *Historical Letters*

should not come as a surprise. As a Jew, who wholeheartedly identified with the emancipatory tenor of nihilism, it was only natural that he should have appropriated Lavrov's ideas in the spirit of the men of the 1860s. Instead of viewing the *Letters* as a departure from the writings of Pisarev and Chernyshevsky, he considered them a dynamic extension of basic nihilist thinking. To him, due to his ingrained Jewishness, this thinking retained its validity. Consequently, important elements of his erstwhile nihilist *Weltanschauung* entered into his apprehension of Lavrov's conception of social progress and revolutionary action, and thus shaped his own programme of action.

The degree to which nihilism retained its hold on Natanson was, as will be shown later, quite commonly replicated among Jewish *intelligenty* of the 1870s. In the person of Natanson, however, this translated itself politically into a concrete Jewish revolutionary contribution in the form of a programme that introduced a party-political dimension into an ostensibly apolitical Populist movement. Therefore, to put it succinctly, it was his Jewish background and Jewish-tinted nihilism which, in formulating the original programme of the future Chaikovtsy, made Natanson emphasize 'scientific rationalism' rather than romantic peasantry, political rather than social revolution, the intelligentsia rather than 'the people'. Let us now return to Natanson's implementation of his programme among the students of Russia.

In order to familiarize students across Russia with the programme and to induce them to adopt its proposals, Natanson took the initiative of convening an illegal student congress in St Petersburg during the Christmas break of December–January 1870/71. The congress was relatively well attended with delegations from Kazan, Kharkov, Moscow, and Odessa. Drawing upon their own experiences, and thus putting life into the abstract language of their programme, the Natansonovtsy proposed to concentrate on socialist propaganda among students and the procurement of appropriate literature, the so-called *knizhnoe delo*. The latter was to serve as 'an instrument for organization', according to the type which was practised in St Petersburg.⁴⁴ Although there were disagreements over the gradualist and intelligentsia-centred approach of the programme, which seemed to neglect the social and educational needs of 'the people', the delegates endorsed Natanson's most cherished and fundamental proposition: the *knizhnoe delo*, that is, the organized dissemination of dissident literature in every major city of European Russia.⁴⁵ By successfully promoting the *knizhnoe delo*, the Natansonovtsy also managed to sell their philosophy of socialist 'self-education'. But equally important, in the *knizhnoe delo* they secured for themselves as

well an instrument for forging organizational links with radical circles all over Russia.

The organizational value of the *knizhnoe delo* benefited Natanson directly in his effort to enlarge and transform his original circle into an organization that would resemble his ideal of a 'self-educational circle', and which would be capable of establishing a network of affiliated circles. For some time prior to the congress the Natansonovtsy had been wooing the members of the St Petersburg *zhenskii kruzhok* (women's circle) to join forces. But it was no easy task to win them over. The women's group was less radical in orientation. For them 'self-education' was primarily a means to their own liberation in a male dominated society. The more outspoken members of the circle, like Sofia Perovskaia, were convinced that any association with men would be detrimental to their own emancipatory goals. There was however one common basis of interest – the *knizhnoe delo* – which made it impossible to maintain an isolationist stance *vis-à-vis* the Natanson circle. They were attracted to this 'business' since it provided them and other women circles with a steady flow of dissident literature for their own self-educational activity. Naturally, this demanded some measure of cooperation with the Natanson circle which, so to speak, controlled the supply and distribution of a large amount of books. Exploiting this situation, Natanson skillfully undermined the women's 'isolationism'. He involved its leading activists – particularly, his future wife Olga Shleisner – in the operation of the *knizhnoe delo* which, willy nilly, brought them in close contact with the general activity of the *Vulfovskaiia kommuna*.⁴⁶ The amalgamation of the two circles was finalized in the summer of 1871 when their respective members attended a joint 'workshop' organized by Mark Natanson and Nikolai Chaikovskii at a dacha in the settlement of Kushelevka near St Petersburg.

The workshop's programme of 'systematic study' and 'seminar presentations' had been prepared beforehand by Natanson, who also supervised the readings and discussions. Apparently, each of the twenty participants was required to give a presentation, which then was discussed in a fashion akin to that of a graduate seminar. For example, Alexandra Kornilova gave a talk on one of the first chapters of John Stuart Mill's *Principles of Political Economy*. Mark Natanson for his part presented 'papers' dealing with Karl Marx's *Capital* in its original German version. Since this work seems to have served as the group's principal text, he used it to handle 'a whole series of programmatic and organizational questions'.⁴⁷ On the whole, these carefully planned 'seminars' proved to be very effective in communicating the spirit, ideas,

and literature which the Natansonovtsy thought essential for any genuine circle of 'self-education'.

But historically the most significant result of Natanson's 'workshop' was that, in the words of Nikolai Chaikovskii, it brought together 'a fairly large group of people being more or less similar in their thinking, similar in their aspirations, and already tied to one another by a common cause'.⁴⁸ The evidence at our disposal suggests that at Kushelevka the group constituted itself as a more or less formal organization in the latter half of August 1871. There and then, the majority agreed with Natanson to proceed vigorously with 'self-education' and its corresponding tasks: '(1) to acquire and publish books at low prices; (2) to supply them to student libraries in St Petersburg and the provinces ...; (3) to promote and assist the creation of new libraries and circles of self-education'.⁴⁹ Thus was born a new organization which later acquired the misleading name of Chaikovskii circle.

The paramount role of Mark Natanson in originating and establishing the Chaikovskii circle has been acknowledged by all those who were closely acquainted with its formation. Nikolai Charushin, who entered the circle at the time of Natanson's arrest in the autumn of 1871 and became one of its most prolific organizers, wrote in his memoirs that there can be no doubt that 'the credit of organizing the first nucleus of the future Chaikovsty belongs to a significant degree to Natanson'; Nikolai Morozov, who wrote the most accurate account of the circle's evolution, emphasizes that Natanson 'must actually be considered the true father of the circle's influence [in subsequent years]'. Finally, Nikolai Chaikovskii himself set the historical records straight in an 'Open Letter to Friends'. In it he approvingly referred to Leonid Shishko's account of how the circle came into being: 'he is completely right', Chaikovskii wrote, 'in stating that it originated at the student library of the Military Academy due to the efforts of its two elected librarians, V. Aleksandrov and Mark Natanson'. As to the actual establishment of the circle two years later, Chaikovskii states unequivocally that the 'leading role' in the constituent sessions at the Kushelevka commune was 'undoubtedly played by Mark Natanson'.⁵⁰

That Nikolai Chaikovskii nevertheless had the honour of giving his name to a circle which was actually founded by someone else was largely accidental in that he inherited from Natanson the 'technical leadership' of the so-called *knizhnoe delo* after the latter's arrest in October 1871. The reason why this transfer amounted to a transfer of name as well was due to the near identification of the circle's work with the *knizhnoe delo* – an activity which, in turn, came to be identified with Chaikovskii because he happened to take over its management precisely at the time

when the *delo* became well established, and consequently known to contemporaries, throughout Russia. Hence, it was in consequence of these 'technical circumstances', and not because Chaikovskii was the actual leader and creative genius of the circle, that his, rather than Natanson's, name became associated with an organization that was to shape revolutionary Russia in the first half of the 1870s.⁵¹

The fact that by virtue of managing the *knizhnoe delo* Chaikovskii christened a whole movement clearly reveals the significance and continuity of this activity among the Chaikovtsy. That the book business assumed such importance for the circle was largely due to its value as a method of organization and communication. It is doubtful, though, whether this extremely useful function of the *delo* was fully recognized already in the spring of 1869 when Natanson, V. M. Aleksandrov, and N. K. Lopatin formed the 'first nucleus of Chaikovtsy'.⁵² At that time, the *delo* seems to have originated as a by-product of the group's effort to supply itself and others with a fund of socio-political literature to meet the challenge of Nechaevist agitation. Quite soon, however, the Natansonovtsy began to perceive it as an 'instrument of organization', and not just as a 'business' of acquiring and distributing books for conducting their own anti-Nechaevist brand of preparatory revolutionary propaganda.

The *knizhnoe delo* was well in place by the summer of 1871. Its system of acquisition, financing, and distribution had become sufficiently developed to ensure a steady supply of literature to interested parties in St Petersburg, Moscow, and some provincial towns. In evolving this system the Natansonovtsy were favoured by the great demand for newly published radical 'bestsellers' like Lavrov's *Historical Letters*, V. V. Bervi-Flerovskii's *The Situation of the Working Class in Russia*, and Lassalle's first volume of social democratic writings. These books, along with works by Chernyshevsky, Dobroliubov, Belinsky, and N. V. Sokolov were extremely marketable items, and as such also happened to be the sort of literature which the circle considered suitable for the realization of its revolutionary ambitions.⁵³

In order to obtain large quantities of these works Natanson approached those dealers from whom he could expect discounts and even cooperation in printing confiscated publications. That he was successful is evidenced by the fact that book dealers like A. A. Cherkesov were prepared to sell books to the circle on credit totalling thousands of rubles; and that publishers like N. P. Poliakov were willing to reprint whole editions of quasi-illegal books to be sold on commission by the circle.⁵⁴ In addition to the reprinting of available editions requested by the Natansonovtsy, Poliakov also cooperated in their quest to print new editions, translations,

and manuscripts which they themselves had prepared for publication. In this way the Natanson circle was able to obtain thousands of volumes by authors of their choice and liking. Poliakov was so impressed by the business acumen and organizational ability of Natanson and his fellow 'Chaikovtsy' that he is reported to have said to Bervi-Flerovskii:

they conducted the business better than any of the St Petersburg or Moscow book dealers or publishers, and were able to handle all its dimensions with exactitude and perfection. They had their agents in all cities, even remote localities, where there were to be found a dozen intelligent young people, and all these agents were active with the very same dedication as was the case with the central organization.⁵⁵

Obviously, the success of the whole operation was largely due to the ability of the Natanson circle to enlist a large number of people, individually or collectively, to support the *knizhnoe delo* in their respective localities. There are numerous examples in the memoir literature of how 'the cause of the book' inspired students to organize themselves into 'circles of self-education' and 'communes', and how these newly constituted bodies, whose members often had common regional origins, became integrally linked with the 'central circle' through their participation in the *delo*. In other words, the Natansonovtsy encouraged the formation of these circles which then could be utilized as *filial'nye otdeleniia* (branches) for the financing and distribution of books. It seems that there was hardly a circle or commune which did not in one way or another participate in serving and promoting this enterprise. Hence, when Nikolai Charushin joined the circle in the autumn of 1871, he was able to observe that 'already at this time the circle had branches in Moscow and other university towns and several provinces, [and that] their business connection linked them to the [central] St Petersburg circle'.⁵⁶

What had begun as a simple enterprise for distributing books had grown into a relatively well-structured network of affiliated circles. As the Natanson programme and the student congress of January 1871 has shown, it did not take long for the Natansonovtsy to realize that aside from its 'business function' the *knizhnoe delo* was also an excellent method of organization and recruitment. To be more precise, the *delo* revealed itself as an effective 'instrument' for attracting and integrating 'that intermediate mass of people which', in the words of one contemporary, 'would otherwise have remained completely outside the movement'.⁵⁷ The *delo* helped the Natanson circle to tap a large reservoir of potential activists who previously had no clear conception of how to translate their radical striving into practical action and had, therefore, been ambivalent and timid in their desire to become politically involved.

Ideally, the distribution of books and the creation of 'libraries' opened to them a field of activity that seemed to be perfectly legal yet allowed them to participate in a movement which sought the revolutionary transformation of Russia. By the same token, they contributed to its proliferation and consolidation because the organizational requirements of the *knizhnoe delo* induced them, if they had not already done so, to congregate into groups sufficiently well organized to serve the *delo* effectively. Naturally, this led to the formation of numerous new circles of 'self-education' as part of the 'central circle's' system of distribution which, by implication, was also a reliable system of communication.

This organizational aspect of the *knizhnoe delo* was readily appreciated in the absence of other, hierarchical, forms of organization which could not arise among the Natansonovtsy due to their ethical and democratic convictions. For a circle like Natanson's, which evolved in opposition to Nechaev's immoral, conspiratorial, and monolithic mode of revolutionary practice, the *knizhnoe delo* provided an efficacious alternative for recruiting and organizing a suitable following. In lieu of any formal framework of leadership, organization, and communication, the *knizhnoe delo* was therefore an ingenious and inconspicuous institution for transmitting the circle's philosophy and for transforming a scattered collection of dissidents into a relatively large and cohesive revolutionary movement.⁵⁸

The *knizhnoe delo* was undoubtedly Mark Natanson's most original contribution to the organization of a circle which, as we know already from his programme, was dedicated to one principal goal: 'to create from among the intelligentsia, and particularly from among the better part of the students, cadres of a revolutionary-socialist ... party'.⁵⁹ But, as such, the *delo* was also a concrete expression of the political nature of Natanson's philosophy of 'preparation'. More than anything else, this preparatory activity was designed to create the organizational infrastructure of a future *party* composed of activists fully conscious of their political and social mission. The *knizhnoe delo* was a manifestation of this fact – and, indeed, a reminder of the degree to which Natanson's conception and application of his programme was less a product of Lavrovist ideas than of his own political perception that in Russia preparation for social revolution meant first of all the creation of professional cadres and organizational nuclei for a future 'party of struggle', a party that would fight for political freedom as a *precondition* for realizing 'democratic socialism' in Russia.⁶⁰

Oblivious to the wider, party-political, design of the *knizhnoe delo*, contemporaries and historians failed to appreciate that besides his

prominence as an organizer Natanson was also the spiritual and intellectual progenitor of the Chaikovtsy – or, more to the point, that his organizational achievements were really a function of his theoretical labours to forge an immediately applicable programme of revolutionary action in Russia. Another reason for the failure to see in Natanson more than a *praktik* may be sought in the fact that his ideological contribution in originating the Chaikovskii circle was later overshadowed by the presence of towering personalities like Chaikovskii, Peter Kropotkin, and Sergei Kravchinskii – and, thus, appeared insignificant in comparison to their more immediate influence among the Chaikovtsy. More specifically, this may explain why, in spite of Natanson's acknowledged intellectual qualities, he was seen by his contemporaries mainly as a person who excelled in practical matters. Most of them would have concurred with S. S. Sinegub's characterization of Natanson: 'for all his intelligence, excellent education and unusual capacity for work, [he] was above all else and more than anything else an organizer – brilliant, energetic, resolute, persistent, and imperious'.⁶¹

This positive and, as we know, nearly unanimous appraisal derived almost exclusively from their experience and/or knowledge of the *knizhnoe delo* which for them was the very embodiment of Natanson's revolutionary achievement. After all, most of them had made their first contact with the 'Chaikovtsy' in the course of Natanson's prodigious effort to establish this enterprise throughout Russia. Hence, they heard of or met him in connection with this activity only, and not in consequence of his pioneering struggle against Nechaevism. That the *knizhnoe delo* was merely a product of this ideological conflict, the practical complement of 'self-education' for creating a 'revolutionary-socialist party', was not sufficiently known, nor sufficiently appreciated, to enable them to agree with Osip Aptekman that 'Natanson was not only the *praktik* [but also] the ideological inspirator' of the Chaikovskii circle.⁶²

The history of the circle, especially of its formative years, clearly vindicates Aptekman's statement. Indeed, Natanson was not just the *organizational genius* who brought together and directed the activities of a 'fairly large group of people' – he was also the *creative genius* who brought about a new conception of how to be active on behalf of 'the people'. Politically sensitized, but morally repelled by Nechaev's agitation, he had begun to seek pragmatically a different path to fulfil his revolutionary calling. Although he had no ready-made formula of his own, he entered into a contest with Nechaev and emerged from it with a comprehensive programme that was practised by his circle and generally accepted by the radical youth of Russia.

His arrest in October 1871 and subsequent exile spelled the end of Natanson's direct participation in the affairs of the Chaikovskii circle. Interestingly enough, it was his prodigious success in organizing the *knizhnoe delo* that caused his downfall. The exponential growth of the *delo* had attracted the attention of the authorities for some time. Finally, alarmed by this novel development of 'legal subversion', the police sought to put an end to it by arresting Natanson on the charge that he was the editor of a new samizdat 'bestseller'.⁶³

Ironically, Natanson's involuntary departure was perhaps a blessing in disguise. His historical mission had been accomplished with the establishment of the Chaikovskii circle and its *knizhnoe delo* in the summer of 1871. Thereafter he seems to have had difficulties in retaining his previous hold over the circle's ideology and activity. His demand to build up gradually a 'party of struggle' through 'self-education' and 'practical activity' had come increasingly in conflict with a growing Bakuninist tendency among the Chaikovtsy to disregard the Kuselevka agreement. Newcomers to the circle, the so-called *novatory* (innovators), were anxious to move beyond the Natansonist programme by forging links with 'the people'. Although the full impact of this new – and truly Populist – orientation showed itself only in 1872–73, there can be no doubt that Natanson sensed what was in the offing. In any case, by the time of his arrest, he was no longer in complete harmony with the circle, which under the influence of the innovators, especially of Kropotkin and Kravchinskii, began to abandon the 'cause of the book' in favour of the 'workers' cause' (*rabochee delo*), and eventually 'self-education' in favour of 'going to the people' (*v narod*).

In conclusion, it is well worth mentioning that, while in exile, Natanson continued to oppose the new tendency which developed among the Chaikovtsy and led many of them to participate in the *v narod* movement of 1874. For this opposition demonstrates succinctly what was uniquely Natansonist about the Chaikovskii circle. As we know from the memoirs of contemporaries, the 'exiled theoretician' tried by correspondence to convince his erstwhile comrades to stay together, to strengthen themselves organizationally, and to continue the *knizhnoe delo* to the best of their abilities.⁶⁴ Speaking about his own commitment to the requirements of revolutionary preparation and admonishing the dissident Chaikovtsy to follow his own example, Natanson wrote in one of his letters to a friend:

I always think about this preparation.... The sort of preparation that would enable me to hold high the banner of the people's cause... I am more and more convinced that the most terrible thing is that so far the people's party has no

complete system or catechism, that about the people it can say only – in vain does it ask the prophet for protection. Consequently, the task of preparation turns out to be to gather all the particular defenders of the people's cause, and to unite them into a structured whole ... My request: try with all your might that the friends [the Chaikovtsy] do not disperse [in their quest to go to the people].⁶⁵

But, alas, they would not heed his advice. 'For us', Aleksandra Kornilova recalled, 'this sounded like the voice of an ascetic monk [*skhimnik*] very remote from life.'⁶⁶

Natanson's insistence on continuing the original preparatory tasks of his programme seemed indeed like a voice from the desert that was utterly out of tune with the impatient striving of youthful Populists to 'merge with the people', to conduct propaganda directly in the factories and, more importantly, in the villages. However, to Natanson, the nihilist-Populist of Jewish vintage, nothing was more remote than this clarion call – 'to the people!' Although no less radical than others in his dedication to the 'people's cause', his political wisdom and pragmatic approach to matters of revolutionary action convinced him that it was premature to appeal to 'the people'. For him this was neither the mark of a 'critically thinking individual' nor that of a 'scientific socialist'. Such a radical was not supposed to sacrifice a rational understanding of revolutionary dynamics to a romantic view of the people's inherently socialist instincts and spontaneous revolutionary will and thus sponsor an ill-organized pilgrimage to the countryside in the expectation of igniting a popular social revolution. Hence, he deplored the 'going to the people' movement as a waste of revolutionary energy that should have been further enriched and preserved for the impending conflict with the tsarist establishment. In all likelihood, therefore, the Natansonist heritage accounts for the fact that among all revolutionary groups the Chaikovtsy were most reluctant to 'go to the people'. Indeed, for the longest time they remained a particular breed who considered themselves neither Lavrovist nor Bakuninist but *sui generis* Chaikovskyst.⁶⁷

3 Chaikovskyst Jews in Moscow, Odessa, and Kiev

In January 1873 the St Petersburg Chaikovtsy assigned to Nikolai Charushin the task of informing affiliated circles that socialist propaganda among workers, the so-called *rabochee delo*, ought to take precedence over any other activities such as 'self-education'. Describing his 'diplomatic mission', which was also intended to promote greater organizational uniformity, Charushin comments in some detail on the activities and personalities of affiliated and analogous circles in Moscow, Odessa, and Kiev. With regard to the membership of these circles he writes that in the Kiev branch Pavel Borisovich Akselrod (1850–1928) was the 'most influential' individual. In the case of the Odessa circle he refers to Solomon Chudnovskii as the 'right hand' of its leader Feliks Volkhovskii. From among the members of the Moscow branch he singles out Samuil Lvovich Kliachko (1850–1914) as 'playing a prominent role'.¹ The fact that all three were Jews points to a significant degree of Jewish participation in the network of Chaikovskii branch circles (*filial'nye otdeleniia*) extending from St Petersburg to other cities of European Russia.

As we elaborate on Charushin's appraisal of Kliachko, Chudnovskii, and Akselrod, we find indeed many other Jews who played an important role in the operation of the *filial'nye otdeleniia*. We shall discover as well that these circles were not merely the creations of St Petersburg Chaikovtsy. Although influenced by Natanson's circle and serving as 'agencies' of its *knizhnoe delo*, these branches originated and developed quite independently along the road which would lead them into the Chaikovskyst fold. Hence, this chapter is as much about the origins, particularly the Jewish roots, of the Moscow, Odessa, and Kiev circles, as it is about the Jewish contribution to these organizations in promoting Natanson's programme of revolution.

In many ways, Samuil Kliachko personifies both the Jewish roots of, and the Jewish contribution to, the circles examined here. In 'playing a prominent role', he actually was the originator of the Moscow circle of

Chaikovtsy and remained its 'most distinguished representative' until his arrest in April 1872.² Liubov Kornilova, who had met Kliachko repeatedly in connection with the *knizhnoe delo*, was so impressed by his revolutionary dedication and practical ability that she is reported to have said: 'Concerning the movement of the [radical] youth, Natanson is a fanatic, and second to him is Kliachko; and if there were more such activists, the fulfilment of the holy cause would be greatly advanced.'³

Perhaps this comparison with Natanson is somewhat overdrawn, but it is not wholly inappropriate. While it would be incorrect to put Kliachko on a par with Natanson as an ideologue of 'self-education' and organizer of the *knizhnoe delo*, a good case can be made for comparing the two in so far as both were the founding-fathers of circles which, although differing in importance, played a pioneering role in turning the Chaikovskii circle into an all-Russian organization. In originating the Moscow branch of Chaikovtsy, Kliachko fulfilled a similar function in the movement as did Natanson in establishing its St Petersburg headquarters. As Natanson's most faithful and skilled lieutenant, he proved to be an invaluable 'agent' of the *knizhnoe delo* by implementing his 'general's' 1870 programme in Moscow and other cities of European Russia.

Samuil Kliachko was the son of a Jewish merchant in Vilna. Apparently a man of the Haskalah, his father provided him with a solid secondary education in one of the local Russian gymnasiums. As in the case of other Jewish Chaikovtsy, this proved to be a stepping stone in the direction of his future revolutionary involvement. Thus on leaving his home town to study medicine at the University of Moscow, he was already known as an 'agitator' who would make a good 'candidate' for the radical student movement emanating from St Petersburg in the late 1860s.⁴

When Kliachko arrived in Moscow for the academic year of 1868–69, student radicalism began to manifest itself primarily in two institutions, the Petrovsky Agronomy Academy and the University of Moscow. In both these places students, like their St Petersburg colleagues, began to stage *skhodki* to promote what they considered legitimate corporate student rights: creating their own libraries, cafeterias, and mutual assistance funds. Kliachko participated actively in these gatherings and was in the forefront setting up several of these 'student institutions' at the university.

In the course of these activities Kliachko gathered around himself a group of students that evolved into one of the two most important circles in Moscow. The other circle was formed at the Petrovsky Academy. But it was Kliachko's university circle which, primarily because of its close relationship with the Natansonovtsy, proved to be the more influential of

the two, and which, for that very same reason, constituted the nucleus of the Moscow Chaikovtsy.

Although Kliachko did not personally attend the St Petersburg 'student congress' of January 1871, he was familiar with the Natanson programme discussed there and became one of its most enthusiastic and reliable practitioners.⁵ He committed his circle to the *knizhnoe delo* and the organization of 'self-education' circles. Viewing his activity in Moscow as a stepping stone for promoting the *delo* in the provinces, Kliachko soon extended the reach of his circle beyond the environs of Moscow. Travelling to central, southern, and north-western Russia, including Vilna, he created an extensive network of connections with gymnasium and university students for the dissemination of dissident literature, and the organization of socialist libraries and book depots (*skladi*). This expansion of 'Chaikovskyst' activity was duly recognized in a report of the Moscow procurator to the Ministry of Justice, in September 1873, which stated: 'the central circle of Kliachko very energetically established relationships [with students] in almost all university, and also many non-university, cities in Russia, trying everywhere to build [circles] of similar shape and persuasion'.⁶ Clearly, thanks to Kliachko, the Natanson circle was spreading its influence beyond the confines of St Petersburg to Moscow and several provincial cities of the interior.

The success of the St Petersburg Natansonovtsy and their Moscow allies in mobilizing radical youth was based on their cooperation in the financing, transport, and distribution of their revolutionary commodity – books. Although Kliachko's achievement in propagating the gospel of 'self-education' has been duly acknowledged, his reputation as a prominent Chaikovets rested on his 'outstanding organizational skills' in managing the *knizhnoe delo*. Under his leadership the Moscow circle became, in the words of Osip Aptekman, the Chaikovtsy's 'transmission station for the organization of propaganda in all of Russia'. As their 'central agency' it handled the transport of literature from St Petersburg for distribution in Moscow and elsewhere.⁷ In return, it transmitted substantial amounts of money which it had collected for the books in the form of payments and donations.

Regarding the financing of the *delo*, it is worth noting that one of the circle's most prolific fund-raisers seems to have been Mikhail Grinshtein. He collected money from fellow Jewish students at the University of Moscow with whom he maintained close links as a member of the Kliachko circle. In addition to money raised in this fashion, Kliachko himself and some of his comrades personally contributed large sums towards the enterprise, part of which was sent directly to the Natan-

sonovtsy and, later on, the Chaikovtsy in St Petersburg, while the remainder was probably spent on buying books in Moscow.⁸

Of course, Kliachko was not alone in performing the circle's intermediary function of transmitting books, money, and, last but not least, information from the centre to the branches and vice versa. Besides Nikolai Tsakni, the most prominent Gentile member of the group, there was also Kliachko's compatriot Isaak Lvov who played a vital role in organizing the distribution of books and the establishment of 'libraries' in places as far away as Odessa, Kharkov, and Simferopol.⁹ Moreover, he appears to have been the circle's 'secretary', handling much of its correspondence with the Chaikovtsy abroad and relaying their letters to the St Petersburg centre. In this he was assisted by his sister Zinaida Konstantinovna (1850/52?–83), who forwarded to him the 'red mail' from Switzerland while studying medicine in Vienna.¹⁰

Still, and without minimizing the contribution of the Lvovs, Tsakni and others, it is obvious from the evidence at our disposal that the overall direction of the circle and, especially, the management of the *knizhnoe delo* were in Kliachko's hands. Indeed, he was in charge of the life-line which sustained the *delo* as an all-Russian operation. Hence he has been rightly considered an outstanding activist who, as the Moscow executive of the *knizhnoe delo*, transformed his own circle, after Natanson's central circle, into 'a second, supplementary headquarters of the revolutionary vanguard in the [early] 1870s'.¹¹

The degree to which Kliachko was in control of the circle's activity and its communication with St Petersburg showed up rather negatively in April 1872, when together with his closest associate Tsakni he was arrested on various charges relating to his role in the Chaikovskyst movement.¹² Being deprived of their leader, the Moscow Chaikovtsy were virtually paralysed because nobody knew exactly the secrets of the 'book trade' as conducted by Kliachko. There was nothing left for them to do but to 'sit still' and await future developments. Fortunately, a suitable replacement for Kliachko was found in Lev Tikhomirov. The circle seems to have regained its old strength only in the spring of 1873, however, which coincided with Kliachko's release from prison. But in its reconstituted form, the circle no longer retained its old Natansonist membership and complexion. In fact, it ceased to be identified with the name Kliachko and came to be known as the Moscow circle of Chaikovtsy.

Samuil Kliachko's arrest and subsequent year of detention resulted not only in the temporary weakening of the Moscow circle, but also marked the beginning of the end of his revolutionary activity in Russia. Though again active in 1873 as a member of the reconstituted circle of

Moscow Chaikovtsy, he did not reclaim his leadership. This may have been due, partly, to a conscious effort on his part to keep a low profile so as not to compromise his comrades, since he probably sensed that he was under secret police surveillance. More importantly, however, it is quite likely that after his prolonged absence, Kliachko had difficulties in adjusting to the new ideological climate of Bakuninist inspired Populist radicalism which made itself felt among the Chaikovtsy in 1872–73. If prior to his imprisonment, the Moscow circle was still very Natansonist in its commitment to ‘self-education’ and its implicit party-political orientation (which, as in the case of the Natanson circle, did not exclude constitutional tendencies),¹³ it now, after his release, was sold on the idea of the *rabochee delo* and the notion of going directly to ‘the people’.

Kliachko’s ideological alienation was accelerated by his personal estrangement from his comrades who accused him of immoral conduct for courting a woman of ‘bad reputation’. The upshot of this, in Charushin’s words, ‘romantic and not particularly pleasant story’ was that they contemplated expelling him. The ‘sentence of expulsion’ was apparently not carried out, however, because of Kliachko’s revolutionary eminence and the fact that despite his ‘moral shortcomings’ he was well liked by all his comrades. To save face, it was supposedly agreed that in lieu of being officially expelled, he should go abroad.¹⁴

Whatever the truth of the matter may have been, it is clear that in 1873 Kliachko was out of harmony with his circle, both ideologically and personally, and that consequently he was no longer its leading figure. Alienated from his comrades and threatened by the police, he decided to leave Russia in the autumn of the same year. Although, in the end, his comrades lamented that in him they had lost a person who ‘was very much needed by the circle in Russia’¹⁵ we can conclude that Kliachko, like Mark Natanson previously, had become dispensable in so far as he had accomplished his mission of making Moscow another vital centre of the Chaikovskyst movement.

At the time when Samuil Kliachko went abroad the Chaikovskii circle was reaching the zenith of its influence in Russia. The movement it had initiated was no longer limited to St Petersburg and some branches, but had assumed the shape of a ‘society of federated circles’ of which, besides Moscow, the most important were in Kiev and Odessa. Of these the Odessa circle was, according to Nikolai Charushin, the better organized and more effective group, in this resembling closely the Petersburg Chaikovtsy. It was largely because of the ‘strong impression’ this circle made on Charushin that he urged the Moscow Chaikovtsy to reorganize in a similar fashion.¹⁶

The Odessa circle was formed in 1872 when Feliks Volkhovskii and Solomon Chudnovskii set themselves the task of accomplishing for Odessa what Natanson and Chaikovskii had done in St Petersburg, namely, to gather the radicals of this Black Sea metropolis into a formal organization for the systematic propagation of socialist ideas and the dissemination of dissident literature. The initiative for this endeavour belongs to Volkhovskii. But its realization depended heavily on Chudnovskii, who already prior to their common effort laid the foundation for a southern version of the Chaikovskii circle in Odessa.

Odessa offered a perfect environment for pioneering the revolutionary movement in the south of Russia. Although the city's immense revolutionary potential showed up only a decade later, the social and cultural conditions for implanting the seeds of revolution were already present on the eve of Chudnovskii's arrival from his native Kherson in 1871. Seized by the forces of modernization, Odessa was experiencing a phenomenal growth of population, of education, of industrialization, and of commerce – all of which gave rise to groups (students and workers) and conflicts (anti-Jewish pogroms) that would feed a movement bent on destruction of the existing order.

Jews were by far the most visible and vulnerable ethnic element caught up in this process of modernization and radicalization. Demographically, their share of Odessa's polyglot population had increased rapidly, outdistancing all other nationalities by reaching 27 per cent in 1873, and 33 per cent in 1892; economically, they began to dominate the professional and commercial sectors; and, educationally, they were well on the way to disproportional representation in the university and secondary institutions of the city.¹⁷ But this very horizontal and vertical mobility made Jews the envy of all other nationalities, in particular the Greeks, who came to blame and victimize them for whatever economic or political woes befell the city. This, in turn, stimulated the growth of Jewish nationalism on the one hand, and revolutionary participation on the other.

Both these developments were nourished by the specific Jewish cultural manifestation of modernization, the Haskalah. In fact, Odessa was a stronghold of this ideology in Russia – so much so that the pious *hasidim* used to say as early as the 1830s that 'the fires of hell began five miles outside of Odessa'.¹⁸ Decades later these 'fires' started to burn beyond the confines of Odessa's enlightened, and vilified, Jewish community as it brought forth many youthful, secularly educated, and socialistically inclined *maskilim* who, disillusioned with both Judaism and official Russia, converted to the revolutionary faith as the only answer to pogroms and poverty, and the only hope for ever realizing their emancipationist aspirations.

Though not a native of Odessa, Chudnovskii was the first Jew to give expression to this sentiment. He thus pioneered a trend that became established in the late 1870s and gained in strength in the following decade, when the reactionary and anti-Jewish policies of Alexander III further enhanced the attraction of the revolutionary movement for the recalcitrant children of the Haskalah, and made them a leading component of the terrorist People's Will Party in Odessa. All this was not evident, however, when Chudnovskii arrived in Odessa in the spring of 1871.¹⁹ Indeed, what awaited him in terms of local radicalism was much less than he expected.

As he mingled with the students of Odessa's University of New Russia, Chudnovskii discovered to his great disappointment that they were completely disinterested in social and political issues. Even the most progressively inclined had not ventured beyond organizing a circle for cultural activities and establishing a quasi-legal student cafeteria and library. Rather than welcoming Chudnovskii into their midst, they avoided him as a dangerous 'political' and even accused him of trying to organize in Odessa circles of 'Nechaevist type and character'.²⁰ Undeterred by this hostile reception, Chudnovskii continued to speak his mind. Castigating the students for their self-centred preoccupation with corporate student affairs, he was relieved to find at least some who were receptive to his ideas. In due course, they came to share his conviction that students ought to be imbued with a definite sense of socio-political responsibility. Hence, they gladly associated with Chudnovskii to politicize the Odessa student community. To this end, they formed a circle of their own headed by the future leader of the terrorist People's Will party, Andrei Zheliabov.²¹

It was around this time that Chudnovskii witnessed a momentous event which, on the one hand, strengthened his relationship with his new acquaintances and, on the other, deepened his commitment to the revolutionary movement. At Easter 1871 Chudnovskii found himself in the midst of Russia's first large-scale anti-Jewish pogrom. Narrowly escaping from being beaten up by the *pogromshchiki*, he experienced with horror how the mobs assaulted people, robbed them, and destroyed their property.²² What he saw convinced him that this 'sad event' could not, as he was repeatedly told, be blamed on the Jews themselves because of their exploitation of the people. With his own eyes he observed that it was not wealthy Jews but impoverished Jewish shopkeepers and artisans who bore the brunt of the destructive fury released by three days of rioting. Having seen the mobs in action and being himself the son of a Jewish merchant who hardly could make ends meet, he had no tolerance for the view that the pogrom was a justified popular reprisal against Jews. As far

as he was concerned, this event was not caused by a righteous response of the 'ignorant spontaneous crowd' against 'Jewish exploitation' but was due to the government which inadvertently had encouraged the *pogrom-shchiki* to pillage the Jews by its passivity, and which – in the first place – had put the Jews in such a vulnerable position by treating them as second-class citizens. To him all this was merely symptomatic of the prevailing 'lawlessness' in Russia (*obshche-russkoe bezpravie*). Chudnovskii took consolation in the fact that the majority of the newly formed circle of Odessa radicals, especially its most outstanding representative, Andrei Zheliabov, shared his indignation at what had happened and agreed with his conclusion that 'the existing political and economic order of things' was to be blamed for the violence directed against the Jews. Their solidarity profoundly impressed Chudnovskii and solidified his faith in the Russian revolutionary movement.²³

The negative response of Chudnovskii and his comrades to the Odessa pogrom foreshadowed a similar reaction of Jewish and Gentile radicals to the much more destructive and widespread pogroms of 1881–82. While this is not the place to elaborate on this theme, some pertinent observations are in order. First let us note that neither Chudnovskii's nor Zheliabov's response received much attention in the literature – and where it did, it has been grossly misinterpreted to conform with the general perception that in revolutionary circles Jewish self-hatred and Gentile antisemitism prevented any adverse reaction to the pogroms. Contrary to what one would expect in view of Zheliabov's solidarity with Chudnovskii, he has been inexplicably singled out for his 'fierce Jew-hatred', and for demonstrating 'the existence of *bona fide* antisemitism' in the revolutionary movement.²⁴

Less offensive, but equally misleading, has been Lev Deich's rendering of Chudnovskii's views about the Odessa pogrom and the Jewish question in general. Deich claims that Chudnovskii, despite his 'incredible indignation', blamed 'the anti-Jewish disorders... on several Jewish exploiters', and that he, like everyone else, considered Jews a negligible quantity in the struggle against economic and political oppression.²⁵ This, as we know, was not true, and can only be explained by Deich's tendency to attribute to others opinions which he himself held at the time. What Deich says reveals more about his own disposition and that of other like-minded Jewish radicals than it does about Chudnovskii's feelings of outrage and unqualified condemnation of the pogrom.

Simply put, the truth is that already in 1871 Jewish radicals – and for that matter Gentiles as well – differed in their response to, and assessment of, the causes of anti-Jewish violence. For some, perhaps the majority exemplified by Deich, the Jews themselves were 'guilty of the hatred

which turned Christians against them... [because their Jewish] predilection for unproductive, easy, and largely profitable occupations provided sufficient grounds for the hostile attitude against them'.²⁶ For others, like Chudnovskii, the Jews may have lacked a healthy socio-economic profile, but this in no way justified their persecution and vilification, which, in the last analysis, was rooted in the tsarist government's treatment of the Jewish people.

Yet, and this is important to keep in mind, exponents of either viewpoint were terribly shaken by the savagery perpetrated against their own kin, and this regardless of their own assimilationist mentality and corresponding alienation from the Jewish world. To both, the riots, in 1871 as in 1881, were a reminder that, however negatively they felt about the social, economic, and cultural life of Russian Jewry, the Jewish question would not go away by ignoring or denying it, and that in one way or another they would have to deal with it if only to put their conscience at ease. Thus, in either case, the pogroms inadvertently turned their attention back to Jewish concerns and invested them with a growing sense of Jewish self-awareness, which, as exemplified by Chudnovskii, tended to strengthen rather than weaken their ties with the revolutionary movement.

Returning to Chudnovskii's activity in the aftermath of the 1871 Odessa pogrom, we find that, while maintaining close links with Zheliabov's circle, he pursued his own, more radical, goal of revolutionary propaganda. Around the same time he was approached by Natanson to serve as an 'agent' of the *knizhnoe delo*. He readily agreed to support the *delo* as part of his circle's 'self-education'.²⁷ But it was not until 1872 that Chudnovskii's group developed into a formal organization which deserved to be called the Odessa circle of Chaikovtsy.

The process was initiated by Feliks Volkhovskii, an already seasoned revolutionary who had joined the Chaikovskii circle when it was formed at Kushelevka. Upon his arrival in September he immediately got in touch with Chudnovskii, requesting his help for organizing the 'youth of Odessa'. Due to Chudnovskii's previous work their common effort quickly gained momentum. By the end of the year they had managed to establish a circle which made its existence known to the radical community through the publication of its own handwritten *samizdat* journal – *Vpered!*²⁸

Having aided Volkhovskii in forming the Odessa circle and bringing out its weekly *zhurnal'chik*, Chudnovskii felt that he had done all he could to eradicate Odessa's image as a backwater of Russian radicalism. He now was anxious to move on to experience life abroad and to continue his interrupted medical studies. Since his surveillance had been lifted in

October 1872 he was free to go and left Odessa to enroll at the University of Vienna for the spring semester of 1873.

In his exploration of Vienna's political life, Chudnovskii made contact with the burgeoning Austrian labour movement and its social democratic leadership. Describing the worker meetings which he attended, Chudnovskii speaks of the 'excitable impressions' this caused him – especially, the fact that such well-attended gatherings were possible and, moreover, capable of publicly criticizing 'the economic and social foundations of contemporary society'. Unlike so many of his Russian comrades when coming into contact with the German equivalent of Austrian Social Democracy, his observations revealed a real appreciation for the constitutional liberties which, however limited, allowed for these mass meetings of workers. For him – again unlike his Russian counterparts – there was nothing philistine in the spectacle of workers gathering in a lawful fashion to discuss economic issues which, however petty, were of direct relevance to their well-being. In short, for him Social Democracy was an admirable phenomenon and would have been worthwhile emulating if only Russia had a constitution.²⁹

Chudnovskii's flirtation with the Viennese labour movement was cut short when the 'call of duty' compelled him to return to Russia. The circumstances were simple enough. 'Living', as Chudnovskii puts it, 'at the crossroads between Russia and Switzerland', he was kept well informed of developments in the revolutionary movement. The most interesting news item was that Lavrov's *Vpered!* was soon to be published in cooperation with the Chaikovtsy, who were to distribute the journal in Russia. With such prospects in the offing he was urged by visiting comrades to return to Odessa in order to organize the delivery of illegal literature, especially *Vpered!*, from abroad.³⁰ Being an admirer of Lavrov and feeling bound by his pledge to serve the revolution, Chudnovskii departed from Vienna at the end of August 1873.

Already *en route* Chudnovskii made preliminary arrangements for a 'special route' to transport contraband literature. In this he was assisted by Galician Ukrainian nationalists in Lvov. Expecting that the prospective 'red mail' service would also be at their disposal, they put Chudnovskii in touch with the right people in Lvov and the Galician border town of Podvolochisk. Due to this he soon had made the necessary provisions for handling the transports from Vienna to Odessa via Lvov-Podvolochinsk route.

His arrival in Odessa was greeted with undisguised pleasure, especially by Feliks Volkhovskii who, more than anyone else, was able to appreciate Chudnovskii's return. Now that he was back, Chudnovskii assumed responsibility for 'transport' and 'communication'. The two tasks went

hand in hand in so far as the delivery, storage, and distribution of literature required extensive correspondence with circles in other cities. Communications were particularly intensive with the St Petersburg and Moscow Chaikovtsy who, as Chudnovskii writes, had 'pinned their hopes on our [circle's] southern "route"'.³¹

However, the first large-scale transport was betrayed by a Jewish smuggler. It led directly to Chudnovskii's arrest in January 1874. This not only spelled the end of the 'southern route' on which the Vperedovtsy and Chaikovtsy had 'pinned their hopes', but also sealed Chudnovskii's fate. He was sentenced to four years of prison and thirteen years of Siberian exile.³²

Due to Chudnovskii's exclusive handling of 'transportation' the Odessa circle itself escaped detection. His arrest, however, affected the Odessa Chaikovtsy in more than one way. First, their *knizhnoe delo* was of course in shambles. But in Chudnovskii they had lost more than just their 'minister of communication' as he was jokingly referred to by Volkovskii; they had also lost a moral and intellectual force that had shaped their ideological disposition and attracted others to join their ranks.³³

Chudnovskii's ability to influence and recruit people was rooted in his own unquestionable sense of duty to work for the liberation of Russia from autocratic rule – a political commitment which he was able to formulate clearly and convincingly. Viewing himself as a Populist of Lavrovist persuasion, he combined his radicalism with a realistic socio-political conception and a relatively moderate approach in acting out his revolutionary calling. In contradistinction to Bakuninist radicals – the so-called 'rebels' or 'riot-instigators' (*buntari* or *vspyshkopuskateli*) – he argued that mankind was by its very nature 'unable to develop and progress without definite forms of government imposing general [social] discipline and legal authority'.³⁴ To destroy the notion of government, the institutionalized expression of laws governing civilized social intercourse between people, was in Chudnovskii's opinion a regressive rather than progressive concept of revolution. Distrustful of 'the people's instinct', he advocated propaganda as the only viable avenue to achieve a meaningful transformation of society. Only people sufficiently educated to recognize their own 'true interest' could hope for a revolution that would guarantee liberty and equality. For him this revolution was a gradual process, and essentially political in nature.

Although a Lavrovist in his commitment to peaceful, preparatory propaganda, and a socialist in his vision of the millennium, he, like Natanson, was neither a typical follower of Lavrov nor indeed a typical Populist. Oriented towards Western political culture, he valued con-

stitutional government and civil liberties and considered these the first priorities in reforming Russian society. It was primarily for this reason that he joined up with the Chaikovskyst movement and never fell under the spell of its truly Populist, anti-Natansonist elements, who abhorred bourgeois liberalism and venerated the supposedly altruistic Russian peasantry. Appreciating the former and disapproving of the latter, he had only one goal in mind – the destruction of autocracy.³⁵

This political motif was apparent in his decision to serve the revolution, his denunciation of the pogroms, and his rejection of Bakuninism. Even at the risk of being called a reactionary by his Bakuninist detractors, Chudnovskii stuck to his convictions and opposed the proselytizing activity of the *buntari* with such rigour that he deserves much of the credit for their inability to gain a substantial following in Odessa.³⁶

The ideological legacy of Chudnovskii was still very much in evidence in the spring of 1874 when the leader of the Kiev circle of Chaikovtsy, Pavel Akselrod, sought to influence his 'Odessa comrades...in favour of Bakuninist views'. He quickly realized that their circle was solidly Lavrovist and especially 'anti-buntarist' in disposition. Thus, although pleased to see him, they were not receptive to his anarchist overture.³⁷

Akselrod's lack of success may also have had something to do with the fact that he himself was still very much a moderate beneath his varnish of Bakuninist extremism. The resultant ambivalence was surely no help in trying to proselytize the Odessa circle. Indeed, for all his apparent zeal, Akselrod was only a recent and not fully convinced convert to Bakuninism. He rejected the anti-educational and pro-violent preaching of its anarchist apostle.

Like most Chaikovtsy, Akselrod and his Kiev circle had initially embraced the self-educational and propagandist philosophy prevalent in the movement during its Natansonist phase of development. Only gradually, and not until 1874, did the majority of Kievan Chaikovtsy fall under the influence of Bakuninist Populism. In this, the Kievan circle by and large followed the general trend of the movement's radicalization and, consequently, differed little from other revolutionary groupings. Yet, in other respects, it was a unique and novel phenomenon in the history of Russian revolutionary Populism. Its members consisted primarily of Jews whose revolutionary commitment had evolved in response to a different set of challenges than had been the case with their Russian and, to lesser degree, Jewish counterparts in St Petersburg, Moscow, and Odessa.

The origins of the Kiev circle can be traced back to the provincial city of Mogilev in Belorussia, where in the persons of Pavel Borisovich

Akselrod (1849–1928), Grigorii Evseevich Gurevich (1852–1929), the Levental brothers, Leizer (1856?–76) and Nakhman (1855?–19?), the nucleus of the future Kievan Chaikovtsy was born. Sociologically, they were an interesting mix: Akselrod was the son of an impoverished tavern-keeper perpetually on the search for means of livelihood; Gurevich was the scion of a wealthy aristocratic family; the Leventals were the sons of a teacher at the Jewish public school of Mogilev. In spite of this diversity in background they had one thing in common in addition to their Jewish upbringing – a secular Russian education; and it was precisely this education which brought them together at an early age in their quest to read Russian classics and to introduce their fellow Jews to European culture.

They were the second, and more radical generation of *maskilim*, the ‘sons’ of the ‘fathers’ who pioneered the Haskalah in Mogilev. The Gurevich family was known as a centre of progressive Jewish intellectual life in this relatively isolated and backward community of extremely conservative and religious Jews. ‘Their home’, wrote an old friend of the Gurevichs, ‘was a club for the Mogilev Jewish intelligentsia and for the Mogilev *maskilim*’.³⁸ Grigorii’s mother was unrivalled in her role as a hostess and as a well of inspiration to the local *maskilim*. Cosmopolitan, knowledgeable, and intelligent, she embodied the emancipated Jewish woman *par excellence*. Having received an excellent education in her native Vilna, she knew several European languages and was well read in German and Russian literature. Grigorii expressed his admiration for his mother later on when he adopted her name Badane as his revolutionary and literary pseudonym. The Leventals were also known for their commitment to the Haskalah. To the chagrin of orthodox Jewry in Mogilev, they were one of the first Jewish parents to enrol their children, Leizer and Nakhman, at the local gymnasium. Both of them did extremely well and graduated with distinction. But, as Pavel Akselrod relates in his autobiography, families like the Leventals and individuals like Badane Gurevich were exceptional for Mogilev, which at the beginning of the 1860s was as yet hardly touched by the Jewish enlightenment movement emanating from Vilna, Kiev, Brody, and Odessa.³⁹ Nevertheless, their presence and influence – however precarious – was sufficient even then to enable a poor, but determined young boy of twelve to realize his dream of a gymnasium education. They literally put Akselrod through his first year of school: some paid his fees, others bought him clothes, and altogether – in accordance with the age-old tradition of provisioning needy yeshiva students – provided him with ‘feeding days’ (*teg*) at their homes throughout the week.⁴⁰

Akselrod proved to be an outstanding student. Bright and mature (he

was two or three years older than his classmates), he soon was able to support himself with stipends and by giving private lessons. By the time he had reached his fifth year of gymnasium he was already known for his maskilic-nihilist activity which, for him, was a 'fully conscious effort to familiarize Russian Jewry, that is, the local youth with the cultural world [that] was embodied for [him] in Belinsky and Turgenev ...'⁴¹

Though popular with Mogilev's Jewish youth, he was very much disliked by the guardians of Orthodoxy. With rare exceptions, even the more enlightened Jews, who had been Akselrod's well-wishers and who had hired him to tutor their children, began to object to his proselytizing activity. For most of them the Haskalah did not imply a radical break with traditional Judaism. There was, as Akselrod's biographer Abraham Ascher has noted, 'a point beyond which they would not tolerate heterodoxy'. Like the more orthodox members of the Jewish community, they were particularly disturbed by the sort of adolescent nihilism that seized their youngsters once Akselrod was present amongst them. It took little to convince them that the rebellious behaviour of the 'sons' against the 'fathers' was part and parcel of his 'pernicious influence'.⁴² Hence, closing ranks with the orthodox defenders of Judaism, they collaborated in ostracizing Akselrod from Mogilev by the simple procedure of depriving him of his private teaching.

Forced to leave, Akselrod went to Nezhin whose Jewish community had the reputation of being more liberal than its Mogilev counterpart. Unfortunately, he was soon compelled to flee that town as well because the Jewish community leaders of his native Shklov had earmarked him as an army recruit once they heard that he had become a *persona non grata* in Mogilev. For the next couple of months Akselrod was constantly on the move to escape the predicament of military service. Luckily, when the recruitment drive was over he was able to return to Mogilev because in the meantime tempers had subsided. It was probably realized that, if anything, Akselrod might have a moderating influence on the nihilist youth as he himself exhibited none of their impudent behaviour.

This whole episode made a deep impression on Akselrod. He began to see himself as a victimized but heroic protagonist of the Enlightenment against the evil forces of reaction – a vanguard as it were, in the struggle of the 'Innovators' against the 'Orthodox'. He took pride in the fact that the rich and powerful had persecuted him and yet had not succeeded in silencing him. More determined than ever, he now dedicated himself to the task of 'enlightenment-propaganda' aimed at the 'Europeanization of [Russian] Jewry'.⁴³

In this endeavour he was joined by other Jewish youths, including Grigorii Gurevich, the Leventals, and Leizer Tsukerman. Like Aksel-

rod, they had undergone the tribulations of conformist pressures directed against them by the conservative element of Mogilev Jewry. This was particularly true of Tsukerman who years later, in 1879, entered the terrorist party *Narodnaia Volia* to serve as its principal printer of underground publications.

Leizer Ioselevich Tsukerman (1852–86) suffered more hardship than any other of his comrades, including Akselrod, for his desire to drink from the fountain of *Haskalah* wisdom. Socially, he belonged to that stratum of Jews who were the most zealous opponents of the *maskilim* in general and of Akselrod in particular. Although not wealthy by any standards, his ‘fanatically conservative family’ was part of Mogilev’s Jewish aristocracy. Both his parents were of rabbinical lineage and had well-established relatives, *sheyneh yidn*, in the uppermost reaches of the local hierarchy.⁴⁴ In Leizer they had been endowed with a son who seemed to be destined to perpetrate their kinsmen’s high profile of religious learning and Orthodox piety. Far more intelligent than any of their numerous children, Leizer excelled in the *kheder* and soon gained the reputation of an *idui*, a young genius well versed in talmudic literature. However, the inquisitive and talented young scholar was unable to desist from tasting the forbidden fruits of *Haskalah-seforim*, the books of the Enlightenment. Soon his secret readings extended as well to German *belles-lettres*. By chance, the pious father discovered in horror that his son read Schiller while pretending to ponder over the sacred pages of the Gemara. An arch-enemy of ‘all *apikurim* and *goyim*’, he unloaded all the wrath he was capable of on his sinful son – and thus started him on the path which led eventually to *Narodnaia Volia*.⁴⁵

The first way station along this road of radicalization, which ended tragically with his suicide in 1886, was his association with Akselrod and the radical *maskilim* of his home town. This relationship turned him into a full-fledged follower of the *Haskalah* movement. Influenced by Perets Smolenskin and Judah Leib Gordon, he became an articulate critic of traditionalist Jewish society whose poems and satires were eagerly read by the local maskilic youth in manuscript form and in the pages of the Odessa *Haskalah* journal *Hameliz* (The Mediator). In the meantime, however, and before he had made himself a name as a ‘fine Hebrew stylist’, he was subjected to the savage, even physical, hostility of his father and the ostracizing animosity of his rich relatives.⁴⁶ All this drove him completely into the arms of Akselrod, who provided him with the spiritual strength to survive his total alienation from his parents and the world they represented in its most extreme manifestation.

In 1867, we find him in the company of Akselrod’s friends who, largely in response to the oppressive pressures of the Orthodox establishment,

had moved beyond the 'infantile nihilism' of previous years and, instead, consciously searched for new social and cultural values in the literature of the Haskalah and the writings of Belinsky, Dobroliubov, Turgenev, and other luminaries of Russian letters. Encouraged by Akselrod's example and the visible strengthening of maskilic tendencies, they formed a circle in the winter 1867–68 to educate themselves in the spirit of the Haskalah and promote secular Jewish and Russian culture among the Jews of Mogilev.

The formation of the Mogilev circle was a purely Jewish phenomenon in the sense that it was an autochthonous response by Akselrod and his friends to their own indigenous society, which for them was a world of hypocrisy, oppression, ignorance, and religious fanaticism. Characterizing the group and its anti-establishment hostility, Gurevich wrote many years later: 'We were, needless to say, *maskilim* and assimilationist, [who] were determined to fight against the Orthodox and the oppressors of the community. The old *kahal* was for us a horrible picture [*shrekbild*] that showed the community leader... making a living out of Jewish misery ...'⁴⁷ Captivated by this *shrekbild* of their community, they sought to break down traditional socio-cultural structures which – as they perceived it – accounted for their spiritual and intellectual stagnation, and their people's isolation from 'universal humanity' in general and Russian society in particular. To this end, they pursued self-education, taught Russian to the Jewish poor, published articles against the *kahal* establishment and its persecution of the maskilic Jewish youth, and even sought the support of the Russian authorities in denouncing the orthodox leaders of the Jewish community.⁴⁸

Obviously, theirs was a revolt rooted in, and directed against, their own Jewish environment. Still, as a product of specifically Jewish conditions, their dissident activity was primarily cultural in orientation. So far it was neither politically motivated, nor was it very much influenced by radical socialist thought. But, as such, it was nonetheless the first phase of their radicalization, which in less than three years would result in the formation of the Kiev circle of Chaikovsky.

Akselrod was the first to abandon his circle's 'enlightenment propaganda' in favour of revolutionary propaganda in a Russian context. To begin with, Akselrod was already a socialist of sorts while still committed to the idea of 'Europeanizing [Russian] Jewry'. Known as the 'idealist and socialist' of the Mogilev circle, he concerned himself with the plight of the Jewish poor.⁴⁹ He sought to help them by organizing free Russian language schools as a first step towards improving their lot, and by attacking the Jewish rich in the local press for depriving them of their democratic rights. Significantly, though, in both cases he was let down by

the Russian authorities who, as he must have realized, ceased to be an 'ally' when his circle tried to promote popular education and egalitarian principles. This realization, coupled with his own Russifying 'self-education', undermined his belief in the emancipatory prospects of Jewish Enlightenment as understood and practised by him between 1867 and 1870/71. Hence by the time he finished gymnasium and was preparing to go to university, he had developed serious doubts about the wisdom of Jewish auto-emancipation through cultural-educational activity alone.

It was against this background, and on the basis of his already highly developed social consciousness, that in the winter of 1871 Akselrod came across Ferdinand Lassalle's *Speeches* which revolutionized his radicalism and gave it a new orientation. To him, the revelation of the book was enormous: here was a German Jew, Lassalle, who was persecuted for his work on behalf of the labouring poor, who held out the prospect of building 'churches of the future' which would 'conquer the whole world', attain 'universal happiness, freedom and equality', establish 'universal brotherhood', and elevate the world to 'a new, infinitely higher degree of civilization than was presently the case'. These grandiose perspectives made a colossal impression on Akselrod. Unconsciously, he began to see himself as a Russian Lassalle who felt that, compared to the universal quest for brotherhood and equality, the Jewish question was merely a particular aspect of general misery and could therefore be solved only with the 'liberation of the fourth estate'. And so, he writes, 'I decided to devote all my energy to work for the liberation of all the poor and oppressed of Russia.'⁵⁰

Years later, under the impact of the 1881 pogroms, he ruefully recalled this decision to seek salvation of Russian Jewry in the universal emancipation of mankind. Reiterating the motives that transformed him from a radical *maskil* into a cosmopolitan socialist, he then wrote:

I still remember how, reading the book of Lassalle, I felt a kind of shame at my concern for the interests of the Jewish people. What significance, it seemed to me, could the interests of a handful of Jews have in comparison with the 'idea of the working class' and the all-embracing, universal interests of socialism. After all, strictly speaking, the Jewish question does not exist. There is only the question of the liberation of the working masses of all nations, including the Jewish. Together with the approaching triumph of socialism the so-called Jewish question will be resolved as well. Would it not be senseless and also sinful to devote one's energies to the Jewish people, which is no more than a single element in the vast population of the Russian Empire?⁵¹

Although he came to regret that 'the glaring light of socialist ideas' blinded him to the need to continue his activity among the impoverished

Jewish masses, he definitely had ceased by 1871 to dedicate his life to 'the cause of the social and cultural rebirth of the Jewish people'.⁵² The Odessa pogrom of that same year had been overshadowed by his momentous discovery of Lassalle and, last but not least, by his own persecution and – the *shrekbild* of the Mogilev *kahal*.

Another book which he was reading around this time gave him practical hints as to how to be active in his newly acquired faith. This was Karl Gutzkov's *The Knight of the Spirit*, a romanticized and fictionalized account of Germany's 1848 revolutionary turmoil. The novel suggested to him a plan of action designed to create 'a large all-Russian organization' that would be capable of producing a revolutionary vanguard from among university students. A 'secret centre' was to coordinate the activity of radical university circles in which young people throughout Russia would study social problems in preparation for a revolutionary vocation. As Akselrod perceived it, this 'preparatory work' would create the necessary precondition for the appearance of revolutionary leaders like Lassalle who, in stark contrast to people like Nechaev, would be intellectually and morally prepared to revolutionize the masses.⁵³

Having decided to become a revolutionary, Akselrod wasted no time in trying to implement his plan. In this he was aided by his friend Grigorii Gurevich, who under his influence had turned socialist as well. Together they went to Kiev in the spring of 1872. It did not take long for this 'company of two' to develop into a circle that was characteristically Chaikovskyist in nature. In the summer of 1872 they were joined by Semen Grigorevich Lure (1854?–90) and his fiancée Dora Shvartsman.⁵⁴ By the end of the year the group quickly expanded to include several Russian students of whom, however, only V. G. Emme (a former Natansonovets) and I. F. Rashevskii became permanent members. A couple of months later Leizer and Nakhman Levental arrived from St Petersburg, where they had been students of the Technological Institute and the Medical Academy respectively. Impressed by Akselrod's glowing description of his circle's activity, they had decided to follow his call to take part in it as well. The formation of the Kiev circle was complete in the summer of 1873 when the Kaminer sisters, Avgustina (1857–?), Nadezhda (1856–1905), and Sofia (1858–?), virtually married into it.

The Kievan component of the circle warrants some comments regarding its Jewish origin. Although Lure, Shvartsman, and the Kaminer sisters had joined the circle under the direct influence of Akselrod, they were already radically inclined before his arrival in Kiev. Like the Mogilevtsy, they were *enfants terribles* of the Haskalah. However, their radicalization was less a direct product of conflicting

pressures within a Jewish community in transition: rather it was the result of their maskilic upbringing and subsequent secular education which engrossed them, like Natanson, Goldenberg, and Chudnovskii, in the nihilist mood of the Russian intelligentsia of the 1860s. Due to this maskilic-nihilist predisposition, they were swept into the Chaikovskyst movement the moment Akselrod appeared in Kiev to preach the gospel of revolution with the 'passion of a fanatic'.⁵⁵

With their entry into the circle its membership assumed its final shape which, needless to say, was predominantly Jewish in composition. Of its eleven permanent members nine were Jews – the Kievtsy: Lure, Shvartsman, and the three Kaminer sisters; and the Mogilevtsy: Akselrod, Gurevich, and the two Leventals. The living quarters of the Mogilevtsy, which they shared with Emme and Rashevskii, was organized in the nature of a *kommuna* and, as such, served as the circle's headquarters. The Kievtsy, who lived with their parents in the *Podol* (the Jewish district), would often meet with the 'resident members' of the commune to conduct 'self-educational seminars'.⁵⁶

Their socialist self-education was very similar to what had been practised by the Natansonovtsy. This was no accident. After all their radicalism, like Natanson's nihilist-Populism, was a combination of maskilic idealism, nihilist scientism, and Lavrovist Populism, which was eminently suited to direct their activity along a path similar to that advocated in the Natanson programme of 1870. This similarity became virtually complete after Emme and Rashevskii joined the circle and, as former associates of the St Petersburg Chaikovskii circle, introduced the Natansonist format of 'self-education'.

Emme and Rashevskii also played an important role in the organizational link-up of the Akselrod circle with the St Petersburg Chaikovtsy and their *knizhnoe delo*. Previously active in the capital, they served as points of contact when Nikolai Charushin visited Kiev on his round trip in the spring of 1873. They introduced their Jewish comrades to Charushin who explained to them the far-reaching activities and organizational endeavours of the St Petersburg circle – and, of course, encouraged them to participate in its federation of analogous circles. Finally, although in a different manner than he had envisaged, Akselrod's vision of an 'all-Russian organization' had begun to take shape.

Six months later, at the end of August 1873, his circle officially entered into an organizational arrangement with the Chaikovskii circles of St Petersburg, Moscow, and Odessa. As part of the 'federation', the Kievan Chaikovtsy subscribed to the tasks which, more than anything else, had led to the unification of the four circles – the practical requirements of the *knizhnoe delo*: the pooling of resources, mutual support for the

publication, transport, and distribution of literature. In the person of Semen Lure, the 'secretary' of the circle, the Kievans maintained communication with their fellow Chaikovtsy in the other cities, they coordinated transport and distribution of literature in their locality, and finally they also searched – though unsuccessfully, it seems – for a 'route' to smuggle books and other needy items across the Galician border.⁵⁷ Hence, the Kiev circle was now performing functions which were vital for the proliferation of the Chaikovskyst movement in south-western Russia.

The beginning of the Kiev circle's Chaikovskyst phase marked the end of its preparatory, self-educational period. While maintaining the *knizhnoe delo*, the Kievans increasingly put their energies into the *rabochee delo*. Although this shift was probably accelerated by Charushin's message that the time had come to move from theory to practice, it was by no means a novel development. From its very inception the circle had been involved in this sort of activity. Akselrod had started the trend as early as the summer of 1872 when, anxious to communicate with 'the people', he approached some artisans and offered to instruct them in the art of reading, writing, and arithmetic. The *rapprochement* proved to be successful as he was invited to their *artels*, communally organized workshops. As the number of artisans wishing to be taught the wisdom buried in books increased, Akselrod was joined in the enterprise by Gurevich, Lure, and the Leventals.⁵⁸

Their interaction with Ukrainian and Russian artisans belies the often stated assertion that Jews, because of their Jewishness and the general antisemitic attitude of the masses, were ill suited for propaganda in a Russian setting.⁵⁹ None of them experienced difficulties that could be attributed exclusively to their Jewish background. Nakhman Levental makes the point very succinctly when he writes that with respect to the *rabochee delo* 'Jewish youth performed as well as their Christian comrades' and that 'in many cases Jewish students devoted themselves completely to this activity'. Even when, as happened in one instance, workers were suspicious of their motives because they were Jews, they were ready to listen and eventually forgot their anti-Jewish prejudices. Except for this, by no means wholly negative incidence, they encountered no resistance to their efforts just because they happened to be Jews. This is also reflected in the fact that, in the division of labour that developed among the Kievan Chaikovtsy, it was not the Russians but the Jews who were mainly active among the workers.⁶⁰

The reason for this division of labour was not related to any specifically Jewish ability for workers' propaganda. If anything, it was rooted in ideological differences which, in time, irreparably divided the Jewish and

Gentile members of the Kiev circle. Much like Natanson, and largely for the same reasons that derived from his – and their – *Jewish* appropriation and combination of nihilist and Populist ideas, Akselrod and his friends interpreted Lavrov in a much more radical fashion than was the case with Emme and Rashevskii, both of whom were completely apolitical in their quintessential Lavrovist perception of propaganda. This difference was bound to disrupt the unity of the circle once its Jewish members discovered in Bakuninism an ideology that seemed to harmonize with their own feelings and striving.

Bakunin's anarchism began to influence the Kievan Chaikovtsy in the latter half of 1873. By that time their circle was no longer the only revolutionary grouping in Kiev. Around Ekaterina Breshko-Breshkovskaia had gathered a group of people who were known to be followers of Bakunin. Their commune was a favourite meeting place for the radical youth of Kiev. Akselrod, Emme, Rashevskii, Lure and the Leventals were also frequent visitors and took a very active part in the debates, which usually centred on the issue of whether Lavrovist propaganda or Bakuninist agitation was better suited to promote the revolutionary goals of justice and equality. It was in the course of these discussions that Akselrod, Lure, and the Leventals realized that in spite of their ingrained Lavrovist tendencies they had more in common with the Bakuninists than with their own comrades, Emme and Rashevskii. Already frustrated with the slow progress they were making among the workers, they, along with the Bakuninists, opposed Emme's and Rashevskii's exclusive Lavrovist preoccupation with 'scientific preparation' and apparent refusal to 'burn their bridges' in total commitment to the cause of the people. Their growing familiarity with Bakunin's revolutionary anarchism affirmed their own sentiment that the revolution was imminent, and that it was wrong to waste one's time on educational propaganda and studying while 'the people' were suffering.⁶¹

Obviously, at this point, their views no longer resembled Natanson's whose 'moderate' disposition had previously been comparable to theirs. Perhaps more radical than Natanson to begin with (partly attributable no doubt to their early conflicts with Jewish orthodox conservatism in Mogilev), the real reason for their shift to the left must be sought in their exposure to the extremist atmosphere in Kiev, which around 1873 had become the hotbed of ultra-Bakuninist ideology in Russia, giving rise to the most reckless forms of adventurous buntarist activism. Yet, as one Soviet historian has rightly noted, their leftward movement stopped short of 'pure Bakuninism' – and their ideological position, even at its most extreme, always exhibited a quasi-Lavrovist *Weltanschauung*.⁶²

Nonetheless, while in principle they did not agree with extremist

Bakuninist propositions, such as denying the value of education and propaganda because this would subvert the revolutionary will of an easily inflammable peasantry, Bakuninism won them over 'by the fact that it radically resolved all questions' – and, one might add, practically dissolved them in one slogan: 'to the people'! Henceforth, all the members of the Akselrod circle, except for Emme and Rashevskii, cooperated closely with the Bakuninist commune in preparing their departure to the countryside.⁶³

This third and final stage in the history of the Kiev circle of Chaikovtsy did not last long. In fact, they had hardly taken the first steps in planning their new venture when they heard that the police were searching for them. Their 'secretary' Lure was arrested after the police, in their general drive to round up the youthful Populists of the 'crazy summer' of 1874, had discovered his address on one of the people belonging to the commune. The ensuing house search yielded a rich harvest. The police found a list containing the names of all the members of the Kiev circle. Luckily, the bad news spread quickly enough to enable Akselrod and the Leventals, who were most seriously implicated, to go into hiding. Eventually, they were able to escape abroad and join up with Gurevich who had been forced to leave Russia already at the end of 1873.

With the disintegration of the Akselrod circle the federated society of Chaikovtsy had lost all its prominent Jewish comrades who played such a vital role in the formation and activity of their organization in Moscow, Odessa, and Kiev. This did not, however, spell the end of Jewish participation in the Chaikovskyst movement *per se*, nor did it exhaust the fund of Jewish contribution to this early phase of revolutionary Populism. On the contrary, the years 1874–75 witnessed a great influx of Jews into the movement. Many of these Jews belonged to a new circle which had established itself in Vilna just around the time when almost all other Jewish Chaikovtsy had been imprisoned or forced into emigration. In terms of origin, ideology, and activity this Vilna circle was to some extent an offshoot and branch of the Chaikovskii circles in St Petersburg and Moscow which, in the persons of Samuil Kliachko and Anna Epshtein, contributed to its evolution. But, as the following chapter will show, it was not simply a product and replica of the St Petersburg circle: its members, not unlike the Mogilevtsy of the Kiev circle, were motivated by circumstances and concerns which did not always reflect the experience that shaped the revolutionary engagement and orientation of the majority of Russia's militant youths.

4 The rebellious Jewish youth of Vilna

The seed of socialism that gave rise to the first revolutionary circles in Russia consisting almost exclusively of Jews was planted by Iankel-Abel (Arkadii) Finkelshtein (1851–1921) in the Vilna Rabbinical Seminary. This school was essentially the Jewish equivalent of the Russian classical gymnasium, and as such proved to be as little immune to the spread of dissident ‘self-education’ as other secondary schools in the Russian empire. In 1871–72 Arkadii Finkelshtein moved beyond this rather innocent reading of ‘forbidden books’ to the organized dissemination of illegal socialist literature. Perhaps without being aware of it, his action initiated the beginning of Vilna’s Jewish revolutionary tradition.

Finkelshtein was born to a lower-middle-class family from Vladislavov, Suvalki province. He grew up in Vilna, where he entered the Rabbinical Seminary in the latter half of the 1860s. In school he was known for his indomitable, inquisitive, and rebellious personality. He found himself constantly in trouble with the school authorities, who strenuously objected to, and repeatedly punished him for, his forbidden excursions to downtown Vilna and his inexcusable refusal to partake in the morning prayers.¹

That his unwillingness to conform was not merely a superficial expression of juvenile rebelliousness is evident from his written assignments in which he revealed a deep-seated animosity against the Jewish faith in particular and religious beliefs in general. A case in point was an essay on the theme ‘About the Enlightened Significance of Rabbis’. In the opinion of his superiors Finkelshtein’s work was scandalous because it was full of ‘bad expressions demonstrating his disrespect for Christian and Judaic religion’. His numerous offences led up to his expulsion from the school when it was discovered in 1872 that he had set up a ‘library of socialist literature’ and was in the process of organizing an illegal ‘educational society’.²

The Finkelshtein library was a short-lived creation. It had been in operation for a couple of months only before some ‘loyal spirit’ denounced its existence. But, as the authorities themselves realized, this

enterprise marked the beginning of socialist subversion among the Jews of Vilna. What induced the young Finkelshtein to perform this 'qualitative leap' from the relatively harmless 'self-educational' study of Russian classical and nihilist literature to the illegal preoccupation with systematically circulating books of 'criminal content'? Apparently, most decisive were his contacts with Jewish university students who often returned on vacations to their native Vilna. As a matter of fact, one of them was Samuil Kliachko. He knew Finkelshtein personally and provided him with the bulk of literature for his library. In all likelihood it was Kliachko, too, who in the first place encouraged Finkelshtein to organize the library, which in its format resembled similar ventures initiated by the St Petersburg and Moscow Chaikovtsy.³ Well aware of this connection and its revolutionary implications, the tsarist authorities quickly disposed of Finkelshtein by deporting him to his native Vladislavov where he was to be kept under police surveillance.

Finkelshtein soon escaped to nearby Königsberg where he enrolled as a medical student at the local university. But instead of earning a medical degree he won for himself the name of the 'red postmaster' who, operating from Königsberg, began to handle the 'red mail' of the revolutionary movement, particularly of the Chaikovtsy, across the Russo-Prussian frontier.⁴

Arkadii Finkelshtein's removal from Vilna did not halt the incipient development of socialist radicalism among the students of the Rabbinical Seminary. On the contrary, the Finkelshtein affair was merely a prelude to the actual unfolding of social revolutionary propaganda in Vilna. The continuity of Finkelshtein's work was assured by his friend Aron Isaakovich Zundelevich (1852–1923).⁵ Within a year of the ill-fated library, Zundelevich organized a group of people into what came to be known as the first Vilna circle – the first exclusively Jewish revolutionary organization in the Russian Populist movement.

The origin of this circle predated the Finkelshtein library and can be traced to a 'circle of self-education' which Zundelevich had formed already in 1870–71 during his second or third year of study at the Rabbinical Seminary. As earlier in the case of Akselrod's Mogilev circle, Zundelevich's original 'self-educational' congregation was initially not at all revolutionary, and its members can be considered radical only within a specifically Jewish context. It developed from regular meetings arranged by Zundelevich for reading and discussing the works of such radical Russian writers as Chernyshevsky and Pisarev. Having already lost faith in the values and prescriptions of Judaic culture they eagerly absorbed the pseudo-scientific, deeply moralistic, and often simplistic

ideas of these representatives of progressive Russian thought. The Russians' positivistic and anthropocentric humanism offered an ideal substitute for the traditional world these students were abandoning, and a powerful incentive to enter the brave new world of nihilist Russia – the only world that seemed to be in tune with their own existential needs and idealistic strivings.

The discovery of this 'new world' profoundly influenced their perception of things Russian and, consequently, their image of themselves and their own nationality. If initially they had rebelled against traditional Jewish society by their refusal to conform, by trying to emancipate themselves from what they considered outmoded habits and prejudices, they now began to adopt a consciously assimilationist attitude. They became, in the words of Vladimir Iokhelson, 'sincere assimilationists [who] saw in Russian enlightened education [*prosveshchenie*] the salvation for Jews'.⁶

It is worthwhile to reflect on the word 'sincere'. For them it meant that 'assimilation' was not an end in itself benefiting some opportunistic individuals, but a means or disposition that would promote the genuine emancipation of all Jews since it was inspired by a love for secular knowledge, social equality, political freedom, and – last but not least – for the Russian people whose humanity and suffering pointed the way to universal happiness. The latent radicalism of this 'sincere assimilationism' revealed itself as soon as its proponents were exposed to the more radical and more explicitly socialist underground literature of Russia's incipient revolutionary Populism. Slowly but surely they realized that the 'Russian people' were as much in need of liberation as their own kin, and that until this was accomplished Russian Jewry could hope neither for emancipation nor assimilation.

It is difficult to tell when exactly the radical *maskilim* of Zundeleovich's circle underwent their ideological conversion to Populism which transformed some of them, notably Vladimir Iokhelson and Zundeleovich himself, into outstanding Russian revolutionaries. Most likely, though, the process commenced in 1872 when they were able to supplement their readings with books and pamphlets from Finkelshtein's 'library of socialist literature'. But it was not until the end of 1873 that their activity assumed a revolutionary colouring. In that year two events coincided which greatly contributed to their radicalization and, consequently, to the formation of the first Vilna circle: namely, the closure of the Rabbinical Seminary, which frustrated many in their educational ambitions, and the presence of Anna Epshtein who 'politicized' Zundeleovich and his comrades in the spirit of the Chaikovskyst movement.

The closing of the seminary had long been in the offing if for no other reason than the fact that, while the school had originally been created to train crown rabbis and Jewish teachers, many students went there for the sole purpose of a secondary education that would qualify them to enter institutions of higher learning leading to a professional career. However, its fate was sealed when the educational authorities realized in the wake of the Finkelshtein affair that the seminary was in effect a potential source of socialist subversion. It was therefore decided in 1873 to close the school and to transform its pedagogical section into a Teachers' Institute which was thought to be more useful vocationally and less susceptible to student radicalism.⁷

Ironically, in taking this decision the authorities themselves contributed to the growth of socialist propaganda in Vilna. The closure of the school was a blow to all those students – usually the most ambitious and talented – who had been planning to enroll at universities or professional schools. They now were left stranded with an incomplete secondary education and with no hope of continuing their studies in the near future. Faced with a frustrating involuntary vacation they became more susceptible than ever to the radicalizing propensity of their 'self-educational' activity and, what is even more important, to the revolutionary propaganda of Anna Epshtein, who just around this time replicated Kliachko's previous effort to link Vilna's restless Jewish youth with Russia's revolutionary vanguard – the Chaikovskii circle.

Anna Mikhailovna Epshtein (1843?–95) was ideally suited to propagate the 'word and deed' of the Chaikovtsy among the Vilna nihilists. Herself a native of Vilna, she had been associated with the Chaikovskii circle from its very inception. The daughter of a well-to-do Jewish family and a graduate of the Vilna Girls' Gymnasium, she had come to St Petersburg in 1869 to study obstetrics at the Medical-Surgical Academy. She was not only the first Jewish woman to enter a post-secondary Russian institution, but also the first to enter the revolutionary movement within Russia. For it was at the Academy that she was attracted to the group of students who in response to Nechaev's agitation had gathered around Mark Natanson. Although apparently not a member of Natanson's original circle, she participated in its 'evening seminars' as a resident of the *Vulfovskaiia kommuna* and subsequently identified herself with, and actively supported, the ideas and practices of the Chaikovskii circle. Unfortunately, little else is known about the background of this remarkable Jewess, whose personal qualities and revolutionary service were highly praised by all her comrades; they respectfully and endearingly referred to her as their 'chief contrabandist and sister of charity'.⁸

In a sense it could be said that in 1872–73 Anna Epshtein succeeded

Kliachko in the role of organizing the Chaikovtsy's transports of illegal literature, the increasing demand for which at this time could no longer be supplied by themselves alone but had to be supplemented from abroad. Familiar since childhood with the smuggling business along the Russo-Prussian frontier, she knew the tools and secret of the trade. According to Kravchinskii, the border was her domain and in 'ruling it' she allowed the transmission of the freely written word and the transfer of illegals from and to Russia which earned her the above mentioned title 'sister of charity'.⁹ But her reputation as 'manager of communication' was integrally linked with the name of Aron Zundeleovich.

From the very beginning of her contraband activity Anna Epshtein was able to rely on Zundeleovich and his group of radical *maskilim*. She had made her first contacts with them in the summer of 1873. Overcoming their initial reluctance to follow the example of Russia's revolutionary youth by invoking contemporary Populist ethos, she convinced them of their duty to 'the people' and, hence, their obligation to support the work of her Chaikovskyst friends.¹⁰ Thus the Vilna circle assumed the role of 'servicing' the Chaikovtsy, with Epshtein teaching Zundeleovich the business of smuggling and herself acting as the principal liaison between his circle and the St Petersburg organization.

Within less than two years of Zundeleovich's apprenticeship, the Vilna circle began to function as the Chaikovtsy's central 'post office' within Russia, which was of service not only to themselves but also to other radical groupings such as their closest ally, the Lavrovisty or Vperedovtsy. Henceforth, Vilna developed into a major centre of communication between revolutionary Russia and its representatives abroad.

This achievement has been rightly attributed to Zundeleovich, who consolidated, regularized, and expanded the contraband enterprise initiated by Anna Epshtein. The clue to his success was his ability to coordinate the lines of communication through which the 'red mail' reached its destination.

The crucial phase in the transport of this mail was its transfer across the border from Königsberg to Vilna and vice versa. To make this stretch of the journey as safe as possible it was necessary to unify organizationally the various agencies handling the sensitive cargo. To accomplish this Zundeleovich travelled repeatedly to Königsberg where he contacted his old acquaintance Arkadii Finkelshtein, who ran 'a sort of central transport agency' which, via Berlin, received illegal literature from the Russian *émigré* presses in London, Geneva, and Zurich; at the border he established a regular working relationship with Jewish contrabandists who were known to him as having at one time or another

smuggled for the Russian underground; and in Vilna itself he created the physical facilities for receiving, storing, and forwarding the mail.¹¹

The result of this effort was rather impressive. Cooperating closely with Finkelshtein, enlisting dependable smugglers, and using Vilna as an operational base, Zundeleovich created in effect a reliable channel of communication for the revolutionary movement throughout the 1870s and into the 1880s. The institutional expression of all this activity was of course the Vilna circle. Through the participation of its members in the contraband enterprise, it constituted a necessary component in the establishment and operation of this so-called 'northern route' which, already in 1874–75, began to handle unprecedented, large quantities of illegal publications for distribution in Russia.

The membership of the Vilna circle was not as large as its historical significance, both as a Chaikovskyist branch and as an organized expression of Jewish radicalism, would seem to suggest. During its almost two years of existence from 1873 until June 1875, the circle encompassed no more than twenty-six people. The nucleus consisted of some twelve individuals of whom Aron Samuel Liberman (1848–80), Vladimir (Veniamin) Ilich Iokhelson (1855–1937), Leiba Mashevich Davidovich (1855–98), and Meer-Sidor Abramovich Barel (1859–193?) were most active and, together with Zundeleovich, constituted the leadership of the circle.¹²

The majority of its members had been former students of the Rabbinical Seminary. As noted before, the seminary had functioned as their 'school of dissent' in a way similar to that at Russian gymnasiums and universities. But this functional similarity was predicated on different circumstances than those of Russian students, whose initial radicalization coincided almost exclusively with their gymnasium education. The rabbinical students had been subjected to influences which already prior to their secondary education had radically altered their perception of the world, literally causing a revolution in their psychological make-up and spiritual development. They had experienced an intellectual awakening that preceded and, in effect, resulted in their entry to the seminary. The very fact of attending this institution was in their case indicative of radicalizing processes which were rooted in their Jewish background, and which largely accounted for their susceptibility to radical ideologies which they encountered in the course of their – from the orthodox Jewish point of view – heretical education in an outpost of subversive Gentile culture.

The role of the Vilna Rabbinical Seminary as a 'centre of revolutionary propaganda' has been linked to the concentration of a relatively large

number of poor students from 'lower-class families'.¹³ This sociological explanation is both misleading and factually flawed. Besides the questionable claim that many pupils may have come from materially less prosperous strata of Jewish society, there is no reason to assume that just because of their poverty they were ideally suited for indoctrination.

Far more important for understanding why the seminary became a hotbed of radical dissent is the fact that, in addition to offering an education to some poor Jewish children, it also attracted rebellious, maskilic-minded boys (often former talmudists) whose parents were still steeped in tradition and were therefore reluctant to send their offspring to blatantly secular schools like the Russian gymnasium. To them the seminary, despite its dubious reputation among orthodox Jews, had the appearance of a Jewish school which made it easier for them to give in to their sons' desire to acquire a secondary education. This was as true for so-called enlightened parents, who under the influence of the Haskalah had begun to appreciate the value of a secular education, as it was for conservative parents who were still opposed to the 'pernicious influence' of Gentile schools. Thus whatever their material circumstances may have been, the children of these families were more likely to find their way into the Rabbinical Seminary than into other government-supported institutions of higher learning.

This observation is borne out by an examination of the personal data of those students who belonged to the circle. Contrary to conventional wisdom the rabbinical student body was a mixed lot covering the whole social spectrum of Jewish society, and its more radical elements were in fact both of lower and upper middle-class origins.¹⁴

The diverse sociological character, but common ideo-psychological profile of the circle's membership, is clearly reflected in the biographies of its better known personalities Iokhelson, Zundeleovich, and Liberman. Vladimir Iokhelson was born into a wealthy Jewish family of Vilna. As we read in his memoirs, his parents were very traditional and, consequently, he himself had a strict religious upbringing that was designed to prepare him for a rabbinical career. Yet, the harshness of parental authority and religious regimentation, driving the child to produce his personal best in talmudic studies, aroused in him an 'instinctive striving' to break free from the oppressive atmosphere of his home.

He soon realized that there was only one way of escape – to learn Russian and to acquire a 'European education'. He succeeded in both. He eagerly seized the opportunity to study the 'language of freedom' when his father hired a teacher for private Russian language lessons, and it mattered little to him that they were given only in the evening after a

whole day of talmudic drills. The next step was more difficult. Only after a long and agonizing struggle with his father was he allowed to pursue an education – albeit not in its classical form, the gymnasium, but in its Jewish expression, the seminary. Hence, in 1868 Iokhelson, by then thirteen years of age, enrolled at the Vilna Rabbinical school.¹⁵

Here he met kindred souls, schoolmates who like him had been motivated by an irresistible urge to leave behind the Talmud, the yeshiva, the ‘religious regulations’ of Jewish traditional life. Amongst them was Zundeleovich who, as Iokhelson wrote half a century later, ‘produced a strong impact on my development and spiritual qualities’.¹⁶ As the older and more experienced of the two Zundeleovich was ideally suited to provide the sort of guidance sought by Iokhelson – and others like him – to cope with the momentous implications of breaking away from the accepted norms of Jewish religion and social behaviour.

In his childhood Aron Zundeleovich himself had been deeply embedded in these norms but, unlike Iokhelson, he experienced them in a positive and religiously elevating sense. Although they brought him up in a traditional manner, Zundeleovich’s parents were by no means excessively orthodox. They were *orme balebatim*, that is, respectable members of the Jewish community belonging to its commercial middle class without having had the fortune, however, to complement their prestigious social status with an equally prestigious economic substance. His father was a ‘scholar’ or ‘talmudist’ (*lamdn*), but, as was usually the case with the *balebatim*, seems to have devoted a larger portion of his time to business. Apparently, he was not very successful even though he was an enterprising person and tried his luck in all sorts of commercial ventures. Due to this perennial misfortune in worldly affairs it was Zundeleovich’s mother who actually provided for the large family of nine children. Her proficient management of an inn on Vilna’s *deytshen gas* (German Street) brought in enough to make ends meet. According to well-informed sources she was a clever and practical Jewess – a ‘woman of valour’ (*aysheskhayel*). The distinct but complementing characteristics of Zundeleovich’s parents have, in retrospect, been cited as an explanation for his own distinctive traits as a revolutionary personality. Perhaps rightly, it has been said that ‘Aron inherited from the father his idealism and enterprising spirit, and from the mother his healthy and practical intelligence’.¹⁷

As a child Zundeleovich was very religious and had only one ambition – to become a rabbi. Being a ‘talented and hard-working’ pupil, he excelled in the kheder, and after his bar-mitzvah went to study at the yeshiva of Smorgon whose rabbi was a distant relative. But instead of deepening his faith and commitment to Judaism, the yeshiva dramatically

changed the course of his 'pious life'. There he came in contact with the 'heretical books' of the Haskalah – and, in the words of one historian, 'became an *apikoyres* and began to seek entrance to Rabbinical school'.¹⁸

Under the influence of maskilic literature, he turned into a 'sceptic' who, in questioning the orthodox maxims of Judaism, lost his religious faith which he replaced with an equally pious belief in the wisdom and truth of secular education – of *eyropeische bildung*. His parents voiced no objection to their son's newly acquired faith if only, it seems, because his father was himself already in sympathy with the Haskalah. With their tacit approval, he abandoned almost three years of talmudic studies and, having taught himself Russian, entered the first class of the Vilna Rabbinical Seminary in 1868. There, as we know, his maskilic nihilism attracted others like Iokhelson into forming the 'self-educational' circle which evolved into Vilna's first social revolutionary organization.

Besides Iokhelson and other former rabbinical students, whom he recruited for the circle, Zundeleovich also enlisted Aron Liberman who was to become the father of *Jewish* socialism, a predecessor of Bundist social democracy. Aron Samuel Liberman was born in Luna, a typical *shtetl* in the province of Grodno. As was often the case with Jewish youngsters, he grew up in the household of his mother's parents while his father, living in Kovno, prepared himself for the rabbinate which had been authorized (*smikhe*) by his father-in-law, the Hasidic rabbi of Luna. Being a precocious child he attended kheder already at the age of four. Advancing rapidly in his knowledge of elementary Hebrew texts, he began to read the Talmud two years later under the supervision of his learned grandfather. It may well be that this early religious education infused him with a lasting respect for the values of Jewish culture and its linguistic medium, Hebrew, which was not even diminished later when he learned to hate the rabbinical establishment in an almost obsessive manner.¹⁹

Much more important in shaping Liberman's personality was his father, however, who during his long absence had developed maskilic tendencies. After the death of his father-in-law he returned to Luna but soon thereafter moved with his wife and nine-year-old son to Sувалки. Here he definitely turned *maskil* and openly demonstrated his conversion by adopting European dress and setting forth his heretical views in the secular Hebrew press, including such journals as Peretz Smolenskin's *Ha-shahar* (*The Dawn*). Later, recalling in a somewhat dramatized fashion his decision to embrace the Haskalah, he was fond of telling friends: 'My son and I opened our eyes on virtually the same day – we both arrived... at the conclusion that we could no longer live as our grandfathers had lived.'²⁰ Whatever the truth of this supposedly shared

revelation, it shows clearly that the older Liberman closely interacted with his son and acquainted him with the ideas of the Jewish Enlightenment. In effect, the younger Liberman received what one might term a secular Jewish education which, while largely devoid of religious content, was very appreciative of the history and culture of Judaism. It was an education in the best tradition of the Haskalah: neither assimilationist nor self-negating. It imbued Aron Liberman with a pride in his Jewish heritage and, as his future struggle on behalf of Jewish socialism was to show, with a belief in its altruistic values.

In 1864, when Liberman was sixteen years old, his father sent him to the Vilna Rabbinical Seminary. He passed the entrance examination effortlessly and, skipping the first two grades, was admitted into the school's third-year course. Liberman turned out to be a star pupil, admired by teachers and classmates alike. In the upper grades he began to form a reading circle to discuss contemporary Russian literature. Later on, this extracurricular activity would serve him well when, as a student in St Petersburg, he came in direct contact with the radical Russian youth and its revolutionary aspirations. But for the time being Liberman dutifully continued his studies which he completed with a teacher's certificate in 1870.²¹

Having taught for a year in a private grammar school of his own, which he had opened in Suvalki, Liberman realized that he did not have the makings of a schoolteacher, and decided to leave for St Petersburg where he enrolled at the Technological Institute in 1872. There is no reliable information about Liberman's life as a student in the capital. But it is most likely that during this time he met representatives of the Russian revolutionary youth and got to know their socialist publications. In any case, when pressing family matters compelled Liberman to break off his studies in 1874 he was already a socialist. Back in Vilna he soon mingled with members of the circle and, early in 1875, accepted Zundeleovich's invitation to join its ranks.²²

In Aron Liberman the Vilna circle had acquired an exceptional individual whose socialist convictions did not reflect the collective psyche of its membership as exemplified by Zundeleovich and Iokhelson. Although like them a product of native heresy, Russian nihilism, and revolutionary Populism, Liberman was unique in that his newly acquired faith did not prevent him from feeling attached to his nationality. Unlike his comrades, who reacted negatively to any manifestation of Jewish identity or national character, Liberman remained a *maskil* in the radical tradition of the Haskalah and always felt 'an inner gravitation towards things Jewish'. He saw himself as a representative of what has been termed 'Hebrew

socialism', that is, a group of radical *maskilim* who, using Hebrew as their vehicle of communication, 'sought to combine political and social protest with a Jewish patriotism'.²³ Liberman's compassion for his own people and his appreciation for their culture was not submerged or, as it were, superseded by an abstract commitment to Populist ideology. Indeed, what distinguishes this relative latecomer to the circle from all the others was that he retained a *positive* Jewish identity even after having adopted the Populist aspirations of the Russian revolutionary movement, and that as a participant in this movement he thought it his foremost duty to spread the socialist faith among his own people.

While Liberman was emotionally incapable of viewing Jewish ethnicity in isolation from – let alone in contradiction to – socialism, his comrades felt no personal attachment to their native culture and saw no reason to perceive the Jewish people as a nationality which could be mobilized for socialist ends. Zundeleovich gave expression to this attitude when he wrote many years later: 'For all of us, Jewry as a national organism did not represent a phenomenon worthy of support. Jewish nationality, it seemed to us, had no *raison d'être*'.²⁴ As far as they were concerned, Jews had survived as a socio-historical entity mainly because of their *rekhtlozikeyt* in a hostile world, and beyond this there was nothing to justify their continued existence, nor was there anything else in their mode of existence worthy of admiration and sympathy. Spelling out the prevailing sentiment, Iokhelson wrote:

We were negatively disposed to the Jewish religion as to every religion in general. [We] considered the Jargon [Yiddish] to be an artificial language, and Hebrew a dead language of interest to scholars only. Generally, from a universal [socialist] point of view, it seemed to us that national beliefs, traditions and languages were worthless ... [We were] estranged spiritually from the culture of Russian Jewry and related negatively to its orthodox and bourgeois representatives from whose midst we, the adepts of the new teaching, had ourselves emerged.²⁵

Clearly, in their rebellion against, and congruent alienation from, Judaism they had come to view Jewishness in its various socio-cultural dimensions as a negative historical phenomenon or even worse, as an impediment to social progress. They, in effect, had ceased to be *maskilim* and had entered the ideological world of Russian Populism. Except for Liberman, they had no intention of continuing their work in a Jewish setting. Faithful to their new socialist creed they accepted the Populist dictum that the intelligentsia ought to 'go to the people'. Although the Jewish artisan worker entered into their conception of 'the people', their focus was on the 'search for allies among the Russian workers since they were expected to be the decisive force [of revolution]'.²⁶

Ironically enough, the very fact that the Vilna circle was Jewish in

origin and membership, and that its preparatory activity took place in a Jewish surrounding gave rise, *nolens volens*, to discussions on questions of specifically Jewish interests, especially why and how socialist propaganda ought to be conducted among Jews. As might have been expected, Liberman did not share the prevailing view that the only purpose of such propaganda was to enlist and prepare Jews for 'going to the [Russian] people'. Zundeleovich informs us that in opposition to the remaining members of the circle, Liberman advocated propaganda among the Jews 'not only as a way of recruiting forces for the Russian revolutionary army, but also as a means of raising the national consciousness [*samosoznanie*] of Jewry, the cultural-national particularities of which he valued very highly among the progressive factors in the development of humanity'.²⁷ This difference of opinion led to endless unresolved discussions which did not, however, affect the circle's practical activity since, according to Zundeleovich, no one responded to Liberman's Jewish-oriented socialism. While these historiosophical deliberations may not have had any direct impact in practice, they were at the source of yet another controversy regarding the publication of Jewish-language agitational literature.

It was generally agreed that in order to spread the message of socialism among Jews and to recruit new followers from among their midst it was necessary to speak to them in a language of their own. Disagreement arose over the question of which language was most suitable for the task: Hebrew or Yiddish? The majority thought that the latter ought to be utilized since this was the speech of that stratum of Jewish society, the artisan working class, which approximated the Russian peasantry and/or European proletariat. A tiny minority argued for Hebrew even though their spokesman, Liberman, appreciated more than anyone else the existence of a Yiddish-speaking proletariat. But he insisted that for the time being Hebrew offered itself as the only language of propaganda because: first, it was less suspect in the eyes of tsarist censorship than Yiddish which was perceived as a potential threat to official Russification policy; secondly, it was a developed literary language allowing for the 'scientific exposition' of socialist ideas; finally and most importantly, it was the written language of the Jewish intelligentsia, which ought to be prepared in true Lavrovist fashion to carry the gospel of socialism to the Jewish masses.²⁸

In view of Liberman's 'Jewish Populism' which he later enunciated with particular force in his appeal 'To the Jewish studying youth' – 'go, youth, go help the [Jewish] proletariat, go to the [Jewish] people, merge with them, suffer with them' – it is obvious that he preferred Hebrew over Yiddish primarily for the last reason cited, namely, for propaganda

among Jewish students versed in talmudic studies. He was convinced that the talmudists were potential revolutionaries because, as he thought, they were ideally suited for socialist indoctrination and, above all else, because they were the only element in Jewish society capable of 'fusing with the people' and transmitting to them the socialist prophecy.²⁹ Indeed, wrote Zundeleovich in recalling the language controversy, Liberman 'looked upon the youth studying the Talmud as a national intelligentsia whose mood was highly idealistic and whose ideal strivings must be directed towards the ideas of a [new] social order so that they might become the spiritual and militant leaders of the Jewish masses in the conquest of the socialist future'.³⁰

Objecting to Liberman's 'nationalism' in the first place, the 'sincere assimilationists' were not at all convinced by his idealized version of the learned Jewish youth. 'We figured', Zundeleovich wrote, that 'the probable and natural leaders of the Jewish masses in the future would be that part of the Jewish youth who had acquired a European education, and the talmudists were considered possible allies only in so far as they were willing to put aside their Talmud...' Sharing neither Liberman's national sentiment nor his love for Hebrew, they saw themselves in the role of that Europeanized radical youth who was destined to lead the 'ignorant Jewish masses' towards socialism. They would do so by utilizing the people's vernacular, a transitory language which – in any case – was bound to disappear with the advent of a denationalized socialistically ordered society.³¹

While Liberman's national sentiment unquestionably complicated his ideological world and participation in the revolutionary movement, there was never any doubt in his mind that as a socialist (regardless of whether this meant being a '*Russian* socialist', a 'socialist Jew' or a 'Jewish socialist') he was an internationalist who, as he said himself, 'wished nothing more than [that] under the pressure of a popular socialist workers' revolution all national divisions should disappear together with the [capitalist] monopoly *in all* its expressions in the life of humanity'.³² Indeed, like all his fellow socialist Jews, he rejoiced in the prospect that the Jews, because of their cosmopolitan character and their ever increasing assimilationist tendency, would pioneer the integration of all mankind into a worldwide, nationless workers' republic. But unlike them, he felt that until then it was necessary – especially in Russia – to speed up this process in that 'propaganda must begin by uprooting national pride and exclusiveness... [and that] the most suitable way of doing this is to conduct preparatory work in each nationality separately'. In taking this approach, he continued, there was no danger of nationalist fragmentation since 'the international character of the socialist move-

ment is given expression in each separate nationality by circles of already conscious social revolutionaries [which] will come together and federate or, finally, merge with one another'.³³ Accordingly, the Russian socialists of Jewish ethnicity would tailor their propaganda to suit their own people without contradicting the spirit of international socialist solidarity.

The fact that Liberman did not envisage the survival of the Jewish people as a national entity, but cherished the day on which the Jews would simply be citizens of a universal socialist society, shows that in principle he shared the chiliastic, a-national, and even assimilationist disposition of his comrades. Strictly speaking, although this was not obvious to them at the time of their heated discussions, their differences were not so much in the nature of 'nationalist' versus 'assimilationist' than they were related to a different conception of the means to a common end. And this in itself was rooted in their own respectively *negative* and *positive* sense of Jewish identity. Identifying himself positively with his Jewish heritage, Liberman was in no hurry to divest himself of his Jewishness. Relating negatively to this very same Jewish heritage, Zundeleovich and Iokhelson felt more at home in a Russian revolutionary environment. For them this was the only place where a Jewish radical could meaningfully emancipate himself in struggling for the liberation of Jews and Russians alike. In their alienation they, as it were, responded negatively to Liberman's positive characterization of progressive elements in Jewry. Being convinced that neither Hebrew, nor the talmudists, nor the Jewish masses were suited for revolutionary action, they tended to dismiss Liberman's argument for the creation of an indigenous socialist movement as a nationalist apparition which had no basis in reality.³⁴ For, as they perceived it, objective conditions were such that if a Jewish radical wanted to contribute anything to the revolutionary process by virtue of his Jewishness he could do this only by approaching the masses in Yiddish in the hope of mobilizing Jewish detachments for 'the Russian revolutionary army'.

This is not the place to elaborate on the historical significance of the circle's controversy over the methods of propagating socialism among Jews. It suffices to note that while Liberman deserves recognition for pioneering a uniquely Jewish perspective in Russian socialist affairs, his opponents' approach was more realistic under the prevailing circumstances which – as Liberman was to discover in subsequent years – militated against organizing a Jewish equivalent of Russian revolutionary Populism. For one, Hebrew hardly proved to be a viable language of Jewish socialist propaganda in Russia, and, for the rest, there was as yet no Jewish proletariat to speak of, nor was there a socialistically receptive *Jewish* intelligentsia. Indeed, for the time being – and, as we shall see,

Liberman began to modify his views accordingly – Zundelevich was probably right in emphasizing that there was not much else a Jewish radical could do but join the Russian movement and, if possible, induce Jewish workers to do so as well. Yet, whatever the historical merits or shortcomings of either view, it mattered little in practice.³⁵ Due to the destruction of the circle, neither Liberman nor Zundelevich had any opportunity to prove the validity of their ideas.

The break-up of the circle was directly related to its subversive activities in the Vilna Teachers' Institute. Acting on information from a student associated with Zundelevich's group, the Pedagogic Council of the school had the Institute's dormitory searched in the night of 29/30 June 1875. The razzia resulted in the discovery of illegal literature which, as subsequent questioning revealed, derived from Zundelevich and other members of the circle. With this evidence at their disposal the school authorities began to realize that they were dealing with a conspiratorial organization, and that the affair could no longer be treated as an internal matter. The trustee of the Vilna school district, M. Sergievskii, informed the Governor-General of Vilna who referred the case to the provincial gendarmerie.

The affair proved to be a *débâcle* for the authorities. In spite of extensive investigations, involving many suspects and their families, no new evidence surfaced that warranted the prosecution of anyone except the known but elusive ringleaders of the circle – Zundelevich, Liberman, and Iokhelson, who had left Russia just in time to escape police detection. In effect, all its members escaped the worst because, having been forewarned of the impending disaster, they managed somehow to utilize the time it took the authorities to instigate proceedings against them. Consequently, although the circle ceased to operate, all its associates remained at large either abroad or in Russia itself. In the end, the case was dropped, resulting in nothing more than an official campaign to intimidate the public, especially the 'student youth' and the Jewish community of Vilna.³⁶

There is however an epilogue to the story. In spite of the circle's liquidation its work was carried on. Although in itself a relatively short-lived phenomenon, the circle produced its own offspring which insured not only the continuity of socialist radicalism among the Jews of Vilna, but also its proliferation in other cities in the Jewish Pale of Settlement. This development was facilitated by the publicity accorded to the alleged crimes of Zundelevich and associates. Bent on eradicating their supposed influence, the authorities exaggerated the whole affair, and thus, unintentionally, made it known in detail to the people of Vilna, especially

students, who had heard little or nothing about it previously. In consequence, all the strictures delivered against socialist subversion by, for instance, the Maggid of Vilna, the Lithuanian Metropolitan, and the Vilna school trustee, proved counterproductive in so far as they conveyed – however negatively – the ‘heroic deeds’ of the circle to the excitable young people of Vilna.³⁷ In fact, all this intimidation and public commotion merely ‘strengthened the interest of the youth in revolutionary activity’ – so much so that Zundeleovich observed from nearby Königsberg that ‘the work in Vilna proceeded militantly’.³⁸

Cashing in on the newly won popularity among the Vilna Jewish youth, the ‘old guard’ resurrected the shattered organization in the form of a second Vilna circle. The formation of this circle was primarily the work of three individuals who had been active already in the first circle: Meer-Sidor Barel, Leiba Davidovich, and Grisha Vanel (1847–?). As the oldest member, who had a dwelling of his own, Vanel initiated renewed gatherings at his home as early as September or perhaps August, 1875. Soon these meetings increased in frequency and participation to the point where it became possible to resume and even enlarge the previous scope of activity. In this the group was aided by its ‘leaders in exile’ who provided inspiration and guidance to the soldiers on the home front.

Ever since Liberman and Zundeleovich had gone abroad communication with them had been maintained by Meer-Sidor Barel: he informed them of what was taking place in Vilna, and it was to him that they addressed their correspondence. As the son of a wealthy and respected merchant, and the darling of his grandfather who owned the biggest jewellery business in Vilna, the young Barel was ideally situated to perform this and other technical tasks including the financing of the circle’s operational costs. By utilizing his family’s foreign business connections, he not only handled the ‘mail’, but also managed the transport of literature, conveyed ‘illegals’ across the border, and secured passports for persecuted revolutionaries. It is not surprising, therefore, that Barel, although only seventeen years old in 1876, was considered to be one of the ‘pillars’ of the circle.³⁹

The literature received by Barel included a pamphlet entitled ‘Concerning the Organization of a Social-Revolutionary Society among the Jews in Russia’. Its author was none other than Liberman, who had written it in London with the help of the editors of *Vpered!*, Peter Lavrov and Valerii Smirnov. In it Liberman reiterated his ideas of creating a Jewish socialist movement. But he no longer emphasized the role of Hebrew and talmudists in such a project. He simply declared that socialist propaganda among the Jews necessitated ‘the creation of an organized force’ capable of operating in a Jewish cultural and linguistic

– that is, Yiddish – milieu. As a ‘Jewish section of Russian socialists’, this organization would ‘conduct propaganda primarily (if not exclusively) among Jews, directing its own activity primarily at workers and the impoverished youth’. Evidently, in this document Liberman approached the position of his previous opponents whose objections, combined with the influence of the *Vpered!* people, may well have prompted him to deemphasize his reliance on the ‘yeshiva intelligentsia’.⁴⁰

The apparent *rapprochement* was reflected constructively in the activity of the new circle. Instead of arguing about the respective merits of Hebrew or Yiddish, its members applied themselves to the task of writing and translating socialist pamphlets in both languages. Simultaneously, they also proceeded to implement the pamphlet’s programme of organization: ‘the creation of social-revolutionary sections among the Jews of the Western region’ and the dissemination of socialist ideas among society’s ‘natural allies of the revolution’.⁴¹

The organization of Jewish revolutionary ‘sections’ beyond the confines of Vilna must be attributed mainly to Leiba Davidovich. Although his role in continuing the work of Zundeleovich’s original circle has been exaggerated, there can be little doubt that he was chiefly responsible for its proliferation to half a dozen places in the Belorussian–Lithuanian northwest of the Russian empire. Active in Dvinsk (Dinaburg), Minsk, Grodno, Elets, and Belostok, he organized circles in each of these cities except Belostok.⁴²

These circles maintained close links with Vilna, allowing for mutual support and a lively exchange of literature and information. This evolving ‘federation’ did not, however, develop into a Jewish ‘social-revolutionary society’. Already from the beginning, the Vilna circle and its fledgling ‘sections’ were destined for destruction mainly because two police informers, Aron Disler and Mordukh Globus, had infiltrated the organization.

Having the dubious distinction of being ‘the first provocateurs in the Jewish revolutionary movement’, Disler and Globus supplied the police with detailed information on the circle’s activity and membership.⁴³ With this incriminating evidence in hand, the gendarmerie raided the residences of nineteen known activists on 29 March 1876. Unlike the débâcle of the previous year, the police were more successful this time. Three months of patient undercover work yielded a rich harvest of ‘forbidden books’ which immediately led to the arrest of all nineteen suspects for ‘organizing together with others a secret circle for the dissemination of social-revolutionary propaganda’. Subsequent information culled from their testimonies resulted in the arrest and ques-

tioning of another twenty-five persons. Henceforth it was only a question of time before the authorities gained a full picture of the degree and nature of socialist subversion perpetrated by the Vilna organization and its associated circles.⁴⁴

The police investigation was officially declared complete on 23 May 1876, and the case was transferred to the Vilna provincial procurator. In Vilna alone forty-four individuals were implicated in the affair. The hard core of the group consisted of eleven individuals. Placing them into the first category of offenders, the gendarmerie referred to them as persons who 'by deliberate agreement distributed books of social-revolutionary content with the aim of arousing in the Jewish population hostility against the existing form of government and the established order'.⁴⁵

In another, fourth category the police listed ten 'propagandists' who had been active in Dvinsk, Grodno, Elets, and Minsk.⁴⁶ The report of the Vilna gendarmerie does not mention all of the people who were eventually implicated for their activities in these locales since investigations there had not yet been completed (nor, of course, would it indicate those who remained undetected throughout the proceedings). But the picture which emerged was disturbing enough for the authorities.

In all these places propaganda had been vigorously pursued in an organized fashion. In Dvinsk, the principal activists were Eliot Isaakovich (Elii Itskovich) Snop (1857-?) and Dmitrii Beliaev, who for the purpose of propaganda worked in a small metal workshop employing a dozen workers. In Grodno there was a sizeable circle of some ten people who were led by Aizik Izaraevich Slutskii (1851-?), Solomon Girshovich Andress, and Konstantin Belskii. In Elets the centre of activity was located in the Alexander Railroad School where Jewish students had organized a circle. And in Minsk there was a very substantial group which was headed by Iakov Evenchik (1858-?) and Mikhail Gemelevich Rabinovich-Chernyi (1842-?). Significantly enough, its membership included even some workers.⁴⁷

Although most of these circles were rather small and had not yet ventured in their propaganda much beyond their own peer group, they were significant in that they were not isolated phenomena. With a combined membership of more than twenty active participants, they, together with the Vilna parent circle, constituted a sizeable group of social-revolutionary Populists. In total the short-lived 'federation' encompassed some seventy individuals of whom at least sixty-five were Jews.⁴⁸

Most rank and file members were eventually apprehended by the authorities, as were almost all leading activists except for Leiba Davidovich. Eluding the police once again as he had done after the break-

up of the first circle, he had the honour of belonging, together with Zundeleovich, Iokhelson, Liberman, and Vainer, to the most important category of offenders: the elusive 'main culprits' who were considered primarily responsible for creating 'a secret circle in Vilna'.⁴⁹

In an overall assessment of the Vilna affair the judicial consultant of the Third Department (office of the tsarist political police in St Petersburg), M. Iakovlev, concluded that 'the formation of secret circles in Vilna for the dissemination of social-revolutionary ideas by means of forbidden works does not constitute anything new, and is rather a repetition of that very same tendency which already appeared in many provinces of the empire'.⁵⁰ *Prima facie*, the consultant Iakovlev was right in his observation that in the context of contemporary Russian radicalism the first and second Vilna circle represented nothing new. Indeed, as one historian has written more recently, these radical Jews did not see themselves 'as in any way a differentiated element in the Populist movement associated with the name of Chaikovskii, the organization of Natanson and the theories of Lavrov'.⁵¹

The Jewish make-up of these circles, however, was definitely a novelty. Its social and political implications were not recognized by Iakovlev, largely – one suspects – because of his naive, if not racially prejudiced, conception of the Vilna affair as merely a product of an ignorant bunch of ill-educated, frustrated, and 'bragging' Jewish students who had 'neither an opinion of their own nor an understanding of the ends which they served'.⁵² True, Iakovlev could not possibly have known that these people expressed for the first time Jewish motifs of revolution which made their circles historically significant as the cradle of Jewish socialist aspirations. But there is no reason why he should have failed to recognize their contemporary significance as a new revolutionary force in Russian society. Such recognition did not require historical foresight.

This, for instance, was clearly demonstrated by another official of the Third Department, M. M. Merkulov, who stated in 1877 that Jewish youth had become an important source of recruits for the revolutionary movement. Taking note of the fact that from among 1,611 'political criminals', Jews made up more than 15 per cent of the second most serious group of offenders, he was quick in stating that 'in this context Jews acquire a special significance. Leaving behind all other strata with the exception of the nobility [they] are extremely harmful not only in political but also in societal terms for the locality in which they are active'.⁵³

Merkulov's observations were vindicated in the years to come. Contrary to Iakovlev's complacent conclusions as to what had taken

place in Vilna and other towns of the north-western Pale, he was right in his perception that Jewish revolutionary involvement had to be taken seriously. It had ceased to be a matter of just a few who incidentally happened to partake in the Russian movement. Henceforth, Jews would be an ever present quantity who, if 'extremely harmful' for their respective localities from the government's point of view, were extremely useful for the development of Russian Populist organizations.

The Vilna circles of 1873–76 symbolize literally and figuratively the fact that Jewish radicals had entered the mainstream of the revolutionary movement, playing increasingly a prominent role as propagandists, organizers, and technicians of the 'underground'. In transforming Vilna from a backwater of Russian radicalism into a vital centre of revolutionary activity Finkelshtein, Epshtein, and Zundeleovich not only pioneered this historical breakthrough but also offered a role model for subsequent generations, most immediately for the members of the second Vilna circle, and thereafter for an uninterrupted string of circles which served the Populist Land and Freedom party in the late 1870s and its successors, the Black Partition and the People's Will, in the 1880s.

The second circle itself ensured that this development was not limited to Vilna only. In the person of Mikhail Rabinovich-Chernyi, it had a representative in Minsk whose propaganda led to the formation of a circle which constituted the beginning of organized socialist activity in the Belorussian capital. Rightly considered 'the father of the revolutionary movement in Minsk', he was an inspiration for those who escaped the arrests of 1876 and continued his work in another circle, whose numerous members shaped Minsk Populist radicalism to the end of the 1880s.⁵⁴ In short, Minsk, like Vilna, had become a vibrant Jewish centre of revolution. In both cities, a revolutionary tradition had been born which captured the imagination of local Jewish youths and mobilized them in support of consecutive Populist parties – a tradition, moreover, that gave rise to a Jewish labour movement, the Bund, in the last decade of the nineteenth century.⁵⁵

5 Socialist Jews and Russian Populism

Taking stock of the role of Jews in the Russian revolutionary movement of the first half of the 1870s, it is apparent that Jewish radicals made up a significant component of Populist circles both quantitatively and qualitatively. Contrary to the notion that Jewish Populists were a minuscule quantity, we find that their rate of participation in the movement approached 7 per cent in 1875–76, signifying a doubling of their ratio since 1869–70.¹ The take-off point for this increase occurred in 1871–72. These years signaled the first sharp rise in Jewish revolutionary involvement that had begun auspiciously with Natanson's, Goldenberg's, and Chudnovskii's participation in the St Petersburg student unrest of 1868–69.² But as these names suggest, overall numbers and percentages tell us little about the actual role and influence of Jews in the formative period of Russian revolutionary Populism.

It is in the make-up and activity of the Chaikovskii circles – the most important organized congregation of Russian revolutionaries in 1871–74 – that we find a more reliable index of the role played by Jews. Here their membership was far in excess of what was warranted by their general presence in the movement at that time, which until 1874 was roughly proportionate to the percentage of Jews in the general population of Russia.³ Jews comprised a staggering 20 per cent of all Chaikovtsy (that is, 22 out of 106 persons) who were definitely members or close associates of the organization in St Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, and Kiev. A breakdown by circles shows that they were well represented in each of these cities with 11 per cent in St Petersburg, 17 per cent in Moscow, 20 per cent in Odessa, and almost 70 per cent in Kiev.⁴ Even more striking is the fact that in the persons of Natanson, Kliachko, Chudnovskii, and Akselrod they were the founders and for some time the leading personalities of these circles. This means that 18 per cent of Jewish Chaikovtsy (four out of twenty-two) belonged to the category of leaders. Clearly, this puts in question the conventional claim that in the movement of the 1870s Jews were only of secondary importance, and that this importance was

limited to their 'technical functions' in organizing the revolutionary underground.⁵

Evidence accumulated thus far indicates that it makes no sense to reduce the multifarious activity of Jewish revolutionaries to so-called secondary, technical functions. This sort of *minimalist* interpretation, politically motivated by antisemitic fairy tales solely blaming the Jews for revolutionary subversion, seriously distorts the actual role of Jew in the Russian revolutionary movement. Indeed, neither during the Chaikovskyst phase of the movement nor later on is it meaningful and factually correct to argue that even its most outstanding Jewish activists did not rank as first-rate 'theoreticians and practitioners ... but [only] as organizers of several specific functions' related to 'inter-circle work'.⁶

At the peril of belabouring the obvious, it needs to be emphasized again that in the work of Natanson, Chudnovskii, Akselrod, and Kliachko, ideology (propaganda) and organization (*knizhnoe delo*) were two sides of the same coin – namely that of creating a revolutionary party whose ultimate objective was the socialist transformation of society. As originators of circles dedicated to this goal, their activity was anything but purely organizational or technical in nature. Even Samuil Kliachko, who seems to fit most closely the narrow definition of 'organizer', was as much an ideologue of socialist self-education as he was a 'technician' of the *knizhnoe delo*. As a principal agent of the latter, he promoted the ideological and practical aims of the Natanson programme in Moscow, Vilna, and elsewhere. And as this programme and the St Petersburg student congress of January 1871 indicated, Natanson is the perfect example, demonstrating both the theoretical and organizational influence of Jews in shaping Russian revolutionary politics. Although much less influential than Natanson in this respect, Akselrod and Chudnovskii fulfilled a similar role in their leadership of provincial circles. Their reputation in Kiev and Odessa rested not only on their organizational achievements, but also on their propagandistic abilities to promote socialism among an ideologically ill-informed and politically uncommitted quasi-radical youth.

The view that Jews performed primarily 'special functions' of a technical, supposedly secondary, nature is also contradicted by what we know about the activities of the rank and file Jewish Chaikovtsy. For instance, the members of the Kiev circle were as much preoccupied with propaganda among students and artisans as they were with serving the *knizhnoe delo*. Neither individually nor collectively can their work be subsumed under a single label or category. Naturally, there are sound reasons for distinguishing analytically between various specific areas in which Jews were active, such as propaganda, organization, transpor-

tation, smuggling, and printing. But, with rare exceptions, it is impossible to identify individuals whose role coincided exclusively with only one of the fields enumerated. This is even true with respect to people like Zundeleovich, Epshtein, and Goldenberg whose principal contribution as associates of the St Petersburg circle was indeed in the technical realm of the revolutionary underground. Goldenberg agitated among the workers of Petrozavodsk and in the course of this activity discovered, and then convinced the Chaikovtsy, that there was a real need to publish socialist literature for popular consumption. Subsequently, as the 'chief technician' of the Chaikovskyst press in Geneva, he not only printed this literature but also decided what to print and what was ideologically acceptable. As for Zundeleovich and Epshtein, their contraband work was closely tied in with recruiting a following in Vilna which led to the formation of Jewish revolutionary circles whose historical significance, both for the Russian movement and for Jewish socialism, far surpassed their function as 'transport agencies' of the Chaikovtsy. Finally, as will be shown later on, both exceeded their role as 'technicians of revolution' by abetting ideologically and organizationally Natanson's efforts in 1875–77 to resurrect the faltering Populist movement through the creation of a revolutionary party in the true sense of the word.

The erroneous minimalist argument rests on the preconceived idea that Populism was a purely Russian phenomenon which, by definition, was alien to the Jewish character. Consequently, it would attract only a few Jews, namely those who were already sufficiently assimilated to imitate the Populist ethos with its ingrained national particularism, slavophil traditionalism, and romantic peasantry.⁷ Elaborating on this theme, Elias Tscherikower explains that even though some Jews adopted this ideology they were nonetheless unable to internalize and practise its ideals because of its 'purely Russian' content. The efforts of Jewish radicals, men and women, to overcome these limitations by mixed marriages, conversion to the Orthodox faith, and zealous adoption of Russian cultural traits, did not substantially improve their ability to absorb genuinely the spirit and message of Populism.⁸ Thus, in his opinion, which derived partly from Deich and shaped all subsequent interpretations, Populism – especially in its supposedly crystalline form of the 1870s – precluded a meaningful Jewish participation in revolutionary circles and organizations.

The alleged inability of Jews to assimilate fully Populist values and ideas became, so the argument continues, blatantly evident during the 1874 'going to the people' (*khozhdenie v narod*) movement, in which, according to Deich, Jewish participation was 'extremely limited –

amounting at most to 15 or 20 people'.⁹ Due to their Jewishness, Deich asserts, these rare specimens were greatly hampered in their ability to preach the socialist gospel to the peasantry. Although theirs was an assimilationist mentality, they were not sufficiently acculturated, nor were they socially and physically fit, to be successful propagandists in a peasant environment. Even though the Jewish *narodnik* was not alone in his inability to relate to the *Lebenswelt* of the Russian *muzhik*, he had much greater difficulties than his Slavic counterpart to overcome the barriers which separated him from the objects of Populist veneration. Having just recently acquired a knowledge of things Russian – language, dress, habits, and numerous other signs of cultural identification – he was still insecure and awkward in his social intercourse with Russians. If this were not enough, Jews were also at a disadvantage because of their social origins and physical weakness. As city dwellers and members of the relatively prosperous Jewish bourgeoisie, they were much less able to withstand the primitive and exacting demands of rural life. Consequently, the Jew was ill equipped to penetrate the world of the *muzhik* which, in Deich's words, would have required him 'not only to know innumerable jokes, proverbs, and stories, but also to possess that unique gift of approaching and captivating the working man' in the countryside.¹⁰

The depreciative assessment, spearheaded by Deich, of Jewish participation in the *v narod* movement, as 'extremely limited' due to diverse social and ethnic traits, is as much a distortion of the truth as the general claim that Jews did not, and could not, assume a significant role in revolutionary Populism because of its 'Russianness'. While it is true that Jews were not overly conspicuous among the hundreds of *narodniki* who went 'to the people', they were not so rare a phenomenon or so inept as Deich and others would have us believe. There is no denying that Jews, who had hardly made their entrance into the non-Jewish world, faced formidable obstacles in trying to 'merge with the people'. But this hindrance has been exaggerated, especially when contrasted with the experience of Gentile *narodniki*. As all the literature testifies and as Deich himself admits, the peasants 'were extremely hostile to anyone whom they suspected of being a *barin*' (a member of the upper strata of society, including the 'educated gentlemen' from the city).¹¹ Whether the *barin* happened to be a Jew or a Russian made little, if any, difference to the peasant. This, and the fact that in general the *narodniki* were strangers in the countryside, puts into question the assertion that the Jew was in a much more disadvantageous position than his Russian or Ukrainian comrade. If anything, Jewish activists were more conscious of the gulf which separated them from 'the people' and the difficulties they would

encounter as propagandists in a rural setting. This feeling was combined with a certain disbelief in the Populist idealization of the peasantry. Hence, at most, it can be argued that these subjective, rather than objective, reasons caused Jews to be more reluctant than others to join the pilgrimage to the countryside. Yet, even in this sense, Jewishness was not really the decisive factor accounting for the relatively low turnout of Jews in the *v narod* movement. The real reason for this had to do with time and space.

Geographically, most Jewish radicals were located in areas of the Pale, and thus remote from the heartland of the Great Russian peasantry, the 'real people' as far as the *narodniki* were concerned. Many of those who seriously thought of 'going to the people' were active in places like Vilna, Odessa, Kiev, and Minsk, which made it extremely difficult for them – both legally and materially – to journey to the favoured interior provinces for the purpose of disseminating socialism.¹² This, for instance, was particularly true with respect to the numerous members of the first and second Vilna circle, who, throughout 1874–76, sought to prepare themselves for their anticipated Populist mission. Ironically, while they readied themselves for this task, which in the first place was hard to fulfil due to physical remoteness, they missed the opportunity to participate in the *v narod* movement, which was rapidly declining after having reached its peak in the summer of 1874.

On the whole Jews were late-comers in their desire to 'go to the people'. For in addition to the geographical impediment, they were simply not on time for this onerous journey since most of them belonged to the second, more numerous, wave of Jewish revolutionary participation and, thus, did not join the movement until after 1874. By the time they were ready to go, the Populist pilgrimage had subsided, with most of its participants already apprehended by the police or gone into hiding. Among these were also Akselrod and his Jewish comrades who had belatedly reached the countryside only to be arrested almost immediately in the general round-up of *narodniki* in the late summer and fall of 1874. Luckily, most of them managed to slip out of the hands of the police and eventually made their way to safety abroad. More typical of Jewish *v narod* candidates were the Jews of the Vilna circles, however, people like Zundelevich and Iokhelson, who missed out on 'going to the people' because of lateness and distance.¹³ Yet, while the bulk of Jewish radicals stayed on the sideline of the momentous movement, there were quite a few – and not just fifteen or so, but at least twice as many – who took part in it.

Some of the better known Jewish participants in the *v narod* movement were Anna Epshtein, Aleksandr Abramovich Khotinskii (1850–83), Osip

Vasilevich Aptekman (1850–1926), and Moisei Abramovich Rabinovich (1856–85?). Residing in St Petersburg as students of the Medical-Surgical Academy, and embedded in the radical community for years, they, unlike their cousins in Vilna or Minsk, were in the right place at the right time to be drawn into the movement, which originated here and in Moscow and then fanned out into the provinces, seizing as well the student bodies of Kharkov, Kiev, and Odessa. Although the latter two cities were located in the Pale and for this reason, as noted before, not as congenial for inviting Jewish participation, they all had a large Jewish student population which partially made up for this defect. Thus, in Kiev almost all Jewish Chaikovtsy joined up with the Bakuninist commune to venture into the countryside. In Moscow, the sole remaining Jewish Chaikovets, Isaak Lvov, went to the peasants of Iaroslav province; and Berta (Beti) Abramova Kaminskaia (185?–78), a member of the short-lived All-Russian Socialist Organization (1874–75), conducted propaganda in nearby factories. Noteworthy are also Anna Rozenshtein (1854–1925) and Mikhail Nikitich Kats (1853–84) from Odessa, and especially Konstantin Abramovich Kats (1855–1920) who was a very able propagandist associated with Sergei Kovalik's circle in Kharkov.¹⁴

While these names, as well as others not mentioned here, fall short of conjuring up the same heroic image of more famous *narodniki* such as Kovalik, Sergei Kravchinskii, Dmitrii Rogachev, Iuri Tishchenko, Sofia Bardina, and Ekaterina Breshko-Breshkovskaia, they prove two things. First, Jews were by no means greatly underrepresented in the *v narod* movement; secondly, they performed no worse – and in some instances even better – than the average *studenty-intelligenty*.¹⁵ The latter point, as well as the *Jewish* circumstances which motivated Jews to become *narodniki* despite the 'Russianness' of Populism may be exemplified by the career of Osip Aptekman and, surprisingly enough, Lev Deich himself.

Prior to his 'going to the people', Osip Aptekman was a typical representative of those Jewish youths who discovered in nihilism, especially in its Pisarevian manifestation, a *Weltanschauung* which harmonized with their enlightened upbringing and maskilic frame of mind. Osip's father, a well-off merchant and a *maskil*, was highly respected by Jews and Gentiles alike. The former admired him for his profound knowledge of Judaic law, the latter for his efforts to promote the acculturation of his coreligionists. Considered a pioneer of enlightenment among the Jews of his native Pavlograd, a small town in the south Russian province of Ekaterinoslav, he nonetheless gave his children a primary religious education in the local kheder. Here the young Osip

became thoroughly acquainted with the writings of the prophets and developed a great liking for the Hebrew Bible. His enthusiasm for religious learning diminished markedly in later years, however, when talmudic studies began to take precedence over the exciting biblical history of Jewry. This, as well as his own father's bias in favour of a Russian education, made it easy for Osip to realize that his calling was not the yeshiva but the gymnasium. Thus, after six years of kheder, he entered gymnasium in 1863.¹⁶

Matriculating in 1869, he was studying medicine a year later at the University of Kharkov. Though serious in his formal studies, he was equally active reading and discussing 'progressive literature' as a participant in Kharkov's foremost circle for 'self-development'. This did not make him a radical yet, however. But, as he noted himself years later, the sort of 'cultural-enlightened work' pursued in the Kharkov circle was 'the best school for producing ... future social activists'. And, indeed, having gone through this 'school' he gained a social consciousness which told him that on finishing his medical studies he would 'be treating the people, the *muzhik*'.¹⁷ The politization of this Populist sentiment occurred after 1871, when he had moved from Kharkov to St Petersburg to continue his studies at the Medical-Surgical Academy.

During the first couple of years in St Petersburg Aptekman remained 'wholly under the influence of Pisarev', dreaming of becoming a 'useful citizen' in the capacity of a competent, certified, doctor of medicine. Only gradually, and primarily due to Lavrov's *Historical Letters*, did he drift into the revolutionary camp. Yet, even when he had decided that he was a socialist, Aptekman stayed on the periphery of the movement because he was unable to identify himself with its Populist idealism. His perception of socialism was Western in orientation, and his socio-ethnic self-perception militated against 'merging' with the peasantry. It was especially the latter which prevented him from accepting Populism. While he was able to overcome his 'Westernism' by submerging himself in Russian history and literature, his Jewishness was not amenable to this sort of intellectual exercise. How could he, a Jewish bourgeois, be close to 'the people', whom, he wrote, 'I did not know since I was born in the city' and to whom, moreover, 'I was a stranger by origin'?¹⁸ Thus, for the next little while, he felt much more comfortable in serving the cause through the acquisition of 'socially useful skills' as a student of medicine.

As the *v narod* movement gathered force, he reconsidered his position. Although a Chaikovets *à la* Natanson in spirit if not association, he naturally did not remain unaffected by his comrades' growing Bakuninist radicalism, which made him appear more like a reactionary than a 'friend of the people'. Hence, after much procrastination and endless discussions

with his fellow students regarding the socialist potential of the peasant commune and the communistic instincts of the *muzhik*, he concluded, in the spring of 1874, that his own education was a luxury and that he must 'go to the people'.

Still, he was held back from going through with his decision for the same old '*special* difficulties' which he considered uniquely his – 'I am a Jew ... What would the people think of my propaganda, would they give it credence or not?' Turning to his comrades for advice, they reassured him that he was 'not typically Jewish in appearance and speech', and therefore could 'pass for a Russian'.¹⁹ Put at his ease, he went to 'the people', at first in the guise of an artisan and then in the vocation he had been trained for – medicine.

While active as a rural propagandist in the winter of 1874–75, Aptekman underwent a truly religious experience which, though unique in its intensity, was not uncommon for Jews who embraced socialism with the pietistic fervour of converts to a new faith. Before turning to the specifics of Aptekman's religiosity, let us note beforehand that this phenomenon was not limited to Jews, but, in fact, characterized the whole *v narod* movement. As a 'collective act of Rousseauism', the movement had all the trappings of a religious pilgrimage to the holy shrine of true humanity – the peasantry. In joining this procession the *narodnik* sought to redeem the sins of his father and pay back his own 'debt to the people'. This motive of self-sacrifice was made all the easier since the Russian peasantry was also his object of veneration. By submerging himself in 'the people' he would reclaim his true identity which he thought he had lost as the 'son' of a 'father' whose generation exploited the peasants and in its course had become estranged from all that was of value in Russian life.²⁰ Unquestionably, the religious impulse of these motives also informed Jewish radicals who were in search of new spiritual values and a meaningful social existence. But having said this, it is equally important to emphasize that there were distinct differences in the origin and nature of Jewish and non-Jewish religiosity and the way this sentiment became secularized as a socialist utopia. It is in the personality of Aptekman, his religious temperament and conversion to the Russian Orthodox faith that these differences come out lucidly.

Osip Aptekman did not become a *narodnik* because he was a penitent *intelligent* seeking redemption in, and identification with, the peasantry. As he himself recognized, his socialism was rooted in his own Jewish background and the maskilic heritage of his father.²¹ Pisarev, Lavrov, and Bakunin gave form and direction to his deep-seated desire to make the world a better place for Jews and Gentiles alike. But the springs of his Populism were not identical with the motives which drove the guilt-

ridden Russian youth to the villages in a religious frenzy for salvation. 'Imbued with socialism', he, in his own words, 'went "to the people" as a calling to liberate all of mankind'.²² Yet, for all that, he was emotionally no less – and arguably more – religious in his socialist beliefs than his non-Jewish Populist friends. To his own surprise, he discovered in the New Testament what he had missed all along ever since he had left the Jewish fold as a youthful nihilist.

While pursuing his propaganda as a paramedic (*fel'dsher*) in a rural hospital operated by a religious order, the Sisters of Holy Magdalene, he found himself in a society which, he wrote, 'was a completely new world for me as a Jew and intellectual person'.

I began to read the Gospel which was totally new to me ... I loved this doctrine, and unnoticeably to myself, I began to read into it what was precious to me, what I was living for – socialism ... And I began to consider the Gospel imperative for myself ... [My] realistic-socialist *Weltanschauung* came to live side by side with evangelical-Christian [convictions].²³

This highly personal, fully conscious, fusion of socialism with Christianity was the consummation of Aptekman's search for an intellectually and spiritually fulfilling philosophy of life.

A deeply religious person to begin with, educated in the kheder, the son of observant maskilic parents, Aptekman could not find spiritual sustenance in either nihilism nor socialism *per se*; neither contained the metaphysical qualities necessary to satisfy his emotional needs for an ontologically grounded *Weltanschauung*. The utilitarian rationalism of Pisarev and the ethical idealism of Lavrov were signposts to the millennium, but Aptekman's journey along this path had created an existential void by leading him away from the certitudes of Jewish life. Nor were the teachings of these 'men of progress' of any help in solving Aptekman's Jewish dilemma – the discrepancy between his own, deeply felt, Jewishness and the Russianness of the people. His newly found 'Christian socialism' resolved all these problems: socialism was no longer just an intellectually and morally satisfying construct, but a personally fulfilling religious experience; and 'the people' were no longer strangers to him, but brothers of the same faith in Christ. This, then, was Aptekman's radical and life-saving solution bridging the gap between his Jewishness and Populism – the socialist religion of a revolutionary Jew who could not live without the metaphysical underpinning he had been accustomed to in 'the fanatically pious Jewish world' of his childhood.²⁴

Almost as an afterthought, it occurred to Aptekman that he should consecrate his 'Christian socialism' through baptism. This, he was sure,

would enhance his work among the Orthodox peasantry. Returning to St Petersburg in the spring of 1875, he entered the Russian Orthodox Church.

Spiritually rejuvenated, and feeling as if newly born, he continued his propaganda, using to the full advantage his medical practice and knowledge of the Gospels to reach the peasantry. With the Bible in the one hand and socialist literature in the other, he presented them with the prospects of a just society conforming to Christian morality. Indeed, as Deich remarked, this 'frail, physically weak, Jew was born for the role of a preacher'.²⁵

Lev Deich himself was not as comfortable as Aptekman in preaching socialism to the peasants. A couple of months in the village was enough to convince him, like most *narodniki*, that it was futile to try to revolutionize the people. But his own lack of success had nothing to do with his Jewishness. On the contrary, the latter made him more determined to succeed where his Gentile comrades had failed. Let us first see, though, how his Jewish background shaped his decision to embark upon a revolutionary career.

Lev Grigorevich Deich (1855–1941) was raised in a highly assimilationist Jewish family. His father, an Austrian Jew, had come to Russia in the 1840s. During the Crimean War he made a fortune selling medical supplies to military hospitals. This entrepreneurial success bought him the prestigious status of a merchant of the first guild, which, in the 1850s, was still rarely awarded to Jews. Active commercially in a non-Jewish milieu, and already imbued with a German-derived assimilationist mentality, he almost completely severed his links with the Jewish community and acculturated into Russian society. By extension, all his children, five girls and Lev, were Russified from early on. Overruling his wife's attachment to Judaism, he insisted that they 'all receive a complete "Christian education"'. Indeed, so complete was their assimilationist upbringing that, in the end, Lev Deich felt himself to be wholly Russian.²⁶ And so it remained until the Odessa pogrom of 1871.

Recalling this unsettling event and what it meant in terms of his nearly obliterated Jewishness, Deich noted in his memoirs:

Prior to 1871, I definitely did not perceive myself as a member of a persecuted, victimized nation.... I considered myself Russian in terms of sentiments, aspirations, and ideals. But on Easter 1871, the first anti-Jewish disorders erupted in Odessa. This sad event suddenly opened my eyes. It stirred up our family, our Jewish friends and acquaintances, calling forth everywhere a strong feeling of grief and despondency.²⁷

Clearly, the pogrom forced him to recognize that regardless of his self-perception he was, after all, a Jew who belonged to a 'victimized nation'.

To be sure, the riots did not cause Deich to undergo a metamorphosis of national reidentification. For that he was too deeply embedded in a non-Jewish milieu. What they did, though, was to invest him with a definite sense of Jewish self-awareness – an awareness that compelled him to become active in the Jewish community in order to create conditions which, he thought, would end Jewish victimization.

The Odessa pogrom occurred when Deich had already acquired socio-political opinions of his own. From early on he had been introduced by his older sisters, then in gymnasium, to the works of Pisarev and Chernyshevsky, which invariably turned him into a nihilist – ‘a realist, believing in peaceful progress’.²⁸ Until the pogrom his nihilism was no different from that of the typical nihilist Russian student of his generation; afterwards it assumed a Jewish coloration, comparable to the maskilic nihilism of Akselrod’s and Zundeleovich’s circle in Mogilev and Vilna. Convinced that the Odessa riots were caused by Gentile hostility against the ‘parasitic’ and ‘abnormal’ life of Russian Jewry, he organized his Jewish friends to work for Jewish ‘self-improvement’ through secular education and vocational training. This sort of Jewish ‘auto-emancipation’ would, he was sure, remove the barriers between Jew and Gentile, and pave the way for *genuine* assimilation into a *progressive* Russian society. In a roundabout fashion, Deich, the ‘non-Jewish Jew’, had in fact become a member of that Jewish movement of nihilist *maskilim* who sought to ‘Europeanize’ and ‘productivize’ Jews through the establishment of ‘free schools’ (*bezplatnye shkoly*) and vocational workshops, usually within the framework of talmud-torah institutions.²⁹

In the meantime Deich’s erstwhile nihilist beliefs began to give way to a more radical *Weltanschauung*. This was tied in with the radicalization of Kiev’s youth under the influence of activists like Akselrod and, more generally, the *Historical Letters* of Lavrov and the anarchism of Bakunin. Yet, neither Lavrov nor, least of all, Bakunin was directly responsible for Deich’s conversion to socialism. What really tipped the scales was the closing of his promising talmud-torah classes on the order of the government’s inspector of public schools. This came as a shock to Deich and, most significantly, constituted another eye-opener in addition to the Odessa pogrom: of all things it was the ‘enlightened’ government of Alexander II, the Tsar-Liberator, which looked upon his initiative to make Jews eligible citizens of society as an act of subversion. It now dawned on him that the social order of things was as much, if not more, to be blamed for the onerous status of Russian Jewry. Already imbued with socialist thought, he now arrived at the conclusion that the ‘prevailing order’ was impervious to peaceful change and therefore

necessitated 'a radical overturn of the whole structure of society and the state'.³⁰

At long last everything fell in its proper place – socialism. This faith and its church, the Russian revolutionary movement, resolved all of Deich's dilemmas that were rooted in his Jewish origin and assimilationist upbringing: socialism solved the Jewish question in general and the problem of his identity in particular. Being a socialist, it mattered no longer whether he was a Jew or a Russian since he now belonged to an international congregation which fought for social equality, political liberty, and universal brotherhood. True, with this he left the Jewish people behind to look after its own interests. But for him this was only a 'technicality' since in the end these interests, as he perceived them, would be taken care of within the framework of a cosmopolitan socialist society.

Obviously, Deich – and here he was typical of the vast majority of revolutionary Jews – ceased to believe that assimilation *qua* emancipation was predicated solely on Jewish 'self-improvement' or, which was the same thing, that the 'normalization' of Jewish life could be advanced under the prevailing socio-political order. Henceforth, he was convinced that nothing would be gained, but much would be lost, if Jews were to assimilate into Russian bourgeois culture. His own prescription for salvation, socialist assimilationism, demanded revolutionary change. As for himself, the stage was set to join the 'party of revolution', the embodiment of his socialist utopia. As a tangible mode of existence, it became as vital for his spiritual well-being as evangelical socialism was for Osip Aptekman. Taking a new look at the writings of Lavrov and Bakunin, he found confirmation and inspiration for his decision 'to submit to the natural course of events': they injected his socialism with a call for revolutionary action, and gave the direction – 'to the people'!³¹

After a lengthy period of preparation Deich left Kiev for the countryside in the spring of 1875. His destination was the village of Astrakhanka, a community of so-called Milk-Drinkers (Molokane) whom the *narodniki*, along with other fundamentalist sects like the Old Believers, thought particularly receptive to socialism. Arriving in Astrakhanka, Deich found accommodation with a peasant family. Working as a field-hand, he easily melted into his new environment. The Milk-Drinkers were impressed by his 'scientific knowledge' and eagerly listened to his discourses on astronomy and other learned subjects. He was singularly unsuccessful, however, in his talks relating to 'socialist themes'. Although they all considered him an 'authority in "scientific" questions', Deich recalled ruefully, they 'remained firmly convinced of the worthlessness of my [socialist] preaching'.³²

Pondering over why the Molokane were so unreceptive, Deich concluded that it had nothing to do with him personally. If he had failed, this was due to 'age-old prejudices and superstitions'. Apparently these 'prejudices', did not extend to his Jewish background, which, as Deich discovered, was an open secret. With fall approaching he gave up his 'mission among the Molokane', convinced that he had done all he could to convert them to socialism.³³ Confident that neither his Jewishness nor his propaganda were at fault for the sorry result he had to show, he returned to Kiev in September 1875. Here he linked up with other disillusioned *narodniki* who sought new ways for mobilizing the peasantry.

When Deich left Astrakhanka in the fall of 1875 the *v narod* movement had almost completely spent itself – almost, that is, because there were still some exceptional *narodniki* who, through luck, ability, and perseverance, remained in the villages. One of these left-overs was Osip Aptekman. But even he gave up in frustration half a year later. Although Aptekman was, as has been rightly noted, 'one of the few pilgrims of whom it can honestly be said that they genuinely liked the peasantry and in return were accepted and respected by them',³⁴ he came to the conclusion that socialist propaganda could not succeed in the villages since 'the people' were too uneducated to comprehend its message. He decided that the time had come to go over from peaceful propaganda to political action. He went to St Petersburg to join Mark Natanson in creating an organization whose motto, 'land and freedom', conformed to his own perception that new revolutionary tactics were necessary.

Osip Aptekman and Lev Deich were, as we have said earlier, not alone among Jews in propagandizing the peasants. But their memoirs offer the most extensive insight into what compelled Jews to 'go to the people' and how they fared. Evidently, they were not successful in getting their message delivered – but, clearly, this had nothing to do with the fact that they were Jews. That most Jewish *narodniki* were highly acculturated and often chose to practise an eminently suitable profession, medicine, to gain the trust of simple folk was, of course, helpful for settling in the village. However, as we know from Deich, the most Russified Jewish *narodnik*, this was no insurance against detection.

Having himself participated in the *v narod* movement, Deich would have been hard pressed to deny that there were at least 'a few Jews' who carried the socialist gospel to the countryside. But while admitting that much, he insists that they did so only in a Lavrovist 'preparatory-educational' sense and with no intention to incite rebellions as was the case with the buntarist followers of Bakunin.³⁵ This raises the much

discussed issue of 'whether or not Jews were drawn in any particular ideological direction'. Were they, as Deich claims, 'mainly on the right, the most moderate wing of... [the revolutionary] movement in the first half of the 1870s', or was this, according to Akselrod, no more than 'a product of fantasy or a tempting hypothesis'?³⁶

Even before Deich's argument about Jewish moderation appeared in print, he was criticized by Akselrod, who responded specifically to his assertion that 'the large majority of Jews joined the "Lavrovists" [*primknuli k "lavristam"*] and only later on... did a few Jews cross over to the Bakuninist side, calling themselves... "*buntari*" and "*narodniki*"'. Akselrod wrote to his friend, 'I don't know where you take it from that Jews were particularly drawn to Lavrovism. I personally knew only two: Ginzburg in St Petersburg and still another [Chudnovskii] in Odessa. The pure Lavrovists in Kiev were... all Orthodox [Russians].'³⁷ The same objections have been voiced ever since. Deich's harshest critic, Elias Tscherikower, dismisses outright the notion that Jews were attracted only to moderate, peaceful activities. Referring to Natanson, Ginzburg, Kliachko, Akselrod, Moisei Rabinovich, Anna Rozenshtein, Chudnovskii – and, last but not least, Deich himself – he states unequivocally that Jews played an *ershtklasike* role in all the revolutionary groupings of the 1870s. Prima facie, one is tempted to accept the verdict handed down by most commentators. Yet, upon closer examination of what Deich meant by 'moderation' and 'Lavrovism', it appears that there is more in his 'sweeping statement' than meets the eye at first sight.³⁸

To begin with, Deich stated his case in ambiguous and, therefore, misleading terms. It seems that for him a Lavrovist was anyone who belonged to the 'more moderate, right wing' of the revolutionary movement. In other words, when he refers to the Lavrovists he, unlike Akselrod, did not have in mind only members of Lavrovist circles – the so-called Vperedovtsy directly associated with Lavrov's *Vpered!* – but also the Chaikovtsy and other groups to the right of the 'pure Bakuninists' or *buntari*. Thus, for example, as late as 1876 he considered Natanson to be a follower of Lavrov even though the latter was to the left of the Vperedovtsy, who called him a 'Bakuninist rebel'. In this instance, as in others, Deich failed to spell out his criteria of what constituted 'moderation' and 'extremism' in the 1870s. While this difference may have been obvious to him, it is by no means self-evident and really depended very much on a given individual's relative position in the revolutionary movement at a particular time and place.

A case in point is Deich's own sense of radicalism in 1876. Disillusioned with preparatory Lavrovist propaganda after his dismal ex-

perience among the Molokane, he had joined the extremist Kiev circle of 'Southern Buntarists'. He now considered himself a Bakuninist rebel (*buntar*). From the perspective of his newly acquired Bakuninism, he quite correctly viewed Natanson's post-Chaikovskyist organization of St Petersburg 'Northern Populists' as moderate compared to his own circle of Kiev *buntari*. And yet, as if to confirm the relative meaning of radicalism according to context, he viewed himself as a moderate in comparison with his Bakuninist comrades since, unlike them, he was unable to shed completely his Lavrovist convictions.³⁹

As a matter of fact, though Deich did not recognize this, his case rested on a spatial and temporal criterion of comparison. He identified correctly the relative sense of moderation shown by Jews in their respective revolutionary groupings at one time or another. He was wrong, however, in absolutizing this 'relative moderation' by labelling anyone to the right of the extremist Bakuninists a moderate of Lavrovist persuasion – and thereby undermined the credibility of his argument in the eyes of Akselrod and like-minded critics.

There is considerable evidence that Jewish radicals exhibited moderate tendencies when confronted with extremist phenomena. As we know, Jewish student activists were in the forefront of opposing Nechaevist agitation in 1869–70. Indicative of their relative moderation at that time is also the fact that with the sole exception of Lazar Shapiro there was no active Jewish supporter of Nechaev. Generally, Jews followed Natanson's lead which led to the creation of the Chaikovskii circle. As Chaikovtsy or Chaikovskyist sympathizers they adopted the radicalized Lavrovist version of Natanson's minimalist-preparatory approach to revolutionary affairs. True, later on, in 1874–75, many discovered in Bakuninism an ideology that was more to their liking. But even then they remained 'Bakuninists of the moderate trend' and stayed to the right of Bakunin's extremist following.⁴⁰

This tendency worked also in the opposite ideological direction. For instance, Lev Savelevich Ginzburg (1851–1916), the founder of the St Petersburg circle of Vperedovtsy and the most important associate of Lavrov in Russia in the mid-1870s, became estranged from his erstwhile mentor because he found the latter's 'radicalization' and manifest sympathy for 'Bakuninists' like Natanson unacceptable.⁴¹ But Ginzburg's moderate stance within Lavrovism was not typical of Jewish radicals. More characteristic in this respect were Jewish Chaikovtsy like Chudnovskii and Akselrod, who leaned towards either Lavrov or Bakunin. Thus, while it is largely true, as Tscherikower has noted, that Jews were present in revolutionary circles of all ideological shades, more often than not, they were – and saw themselves as – moderate in

comparison with the more extremist elements of their respective revolutionary groupings.

But this 'relative moderation' did not necessarily mean that Jews belonged predominantly to the 'right wing' of the revolutionary movement. Contrary to Deich's assertion, in this wider context Jewish radicals were 'moderates' only in so far as they occupied the middle ground of the ideological spectrum which stretched from the extreme right, the so-called 'Socialist legalists', to the Jacobin Tkachevists on the extreme left, who advocated the seizure of political power in order to bring about the socialist transformation of society through state coercion. There were exceptions, of course, the most obvious being Lev Ginzburg, who stood with one foot already in the camp of the 'legalists', and Moisei Rabinovich, who was a leading personality of the St Petersburg circle of 'pure Bakuninists' and one of its most eloquent spokesmen.⁴² But such 'extremists' to either side of Lavrovism and Bakuninism were rare phenomena. The majority of Jews fell somewhere in between these extremes. In practice, this meant that most Jewish activists gravitated towards the Chaikovskii circle which, although not usually attributed with an ideology of its own, occupied a centre-left position in the movement that was ideologically distinct from both Lavrovism and Bakuninism.

The broad Chaikovskyst platform was ideally suited for those – especially Jews – who were unable to identify solely with either of the above. It was an alternative which best accommodated – but was also shaped by – people like Natanson, Chudnovskii, Akselrod, Kliachko, Zundeleovich, and Aptekman, all of whom differed from one another according to the Lavrovist-Bakuninist mix of their ideological package.⁴³ On the whole, the disposition of Jews was therefore Chaikovskyst in nature with variations in either direction of the ideological spectrum as defined by Lavrovism on the right and Bakuninism on the left. Beyond these parameters Jewish representation was not very pronounced, and probably non-existent with regard to Jacobin Tkachevism which, in any case, was not a strong revolutionary force in Russia.⁴⁴ Within these limits, 'Chaikovskyst' best describes the nature and degree of Jewish radicalism in the revolutionary movement until the mid-1870s.

The reason for the comparatively moderate disposition of Jews in the revolutionary movement must be sought in the fact that, paradoxically, they were not really *Russian* Populists. They happened to be *narodniki* because, in Russia, Populism was the only form of socialism available in the 1870s and, for that matter, in the 1880s as well. Similarly, in the

1860s, they were nihilists because this was the ideological currency of Russian radicalism at that time.

Ironically, while historians reject Deich's argument of 'Jewish moderation' and refuse to see any traces of Jewishness – or specific Jewish motifs – in Populism, they agree with him that there was such a thing as a *Jewish* nihilist who adapted Russian nihilism to suit his Jewish sensibilities. There is near unanimity that Jewish nihilism was much more educational in content than Russian nihilism, which tended to be more radical in its negation of autocracy and society at large. As Deich and his critics see it, nihilism among Jews was a liberating cultural phenomenon which by its very nature could not give rise to the sort of political extremism witnessed among Russian nihilists in the case of Ishutin's 'Hell' or Karakazov's attempted assassination of Alexander II. The Jewish nihilist was simply incapable of such hostility against the Tsar-Liberator whose beneficent reforms allowed him to escape the suffocating atmosphere of the Jewish Pale. Instead, he channelled all his energy into peaceful emancipatory-assimilationist endeavours like self-education and the creation of free literary schools for the Jewish poor. So powerful and lasting was this gratitude felt towards *dem giten kaiser* that, says Deich, 'for a fairly long period of time any kind of revolutionary attempt seemed to us not only excessive but also extremely harmful'.⁴⁵ From all this Deich alone, however, draws the conclusion that similar moderating factors were also operational later on among Populist Jews. Indeed, though largely for the wrong reasons, Deich was right in detecting Jewish characteristics not only in the nihilist sixties, but also in the Populist seventies.

There was in fact a continuity in radical Jewish behaviour. But this behaviour was the result of a profound historical process which originated with the Jewish Enlightenment and found its first expression in the person of Grigorii Peretts. Thus rooted in the maskilic subsoil of Jewish radicalism since its Decembrist beginnings, Jewish distinctiveness in both nihilism and Populism derived from a different source than vulgar assimilationism and simple gratitude for Alexander II.

In the case of Jewish nihilism we already know that this movement was essentially a continuation of the Haskalah, whereby 'Berlin's Mendelssohn was displaced by the vision of the "Russian of Mosaic Persuasion" and that, in turn, subjected to attack by the would-be-Pisarevs.'⁴⁶ In their catholic dedication to modern education and their equally uncompromising maskilic activism to realize their 'fathers'' vision of an emancipated and enlightened 'new man', the nihilist 'sons' discovered in Pisarev's 'rational egoist' a much more radical and relevant version of an already familiar ideal.

The 'new man' of Russian nihilism, Bazarov, reflected the 'sons' own sense of alienation and quest for emancipation. Epitomizing the new nihilist teachings, his example proved irresistible to the younger generation of *maskilim* who had been seized and cast adrift by the forces of modernity which irreparably cut them loose from the moorings of Judaism. Stressing secular knowledge, self-improvement, socially useful sciences – and, last but not least, universal humanity and a rationally ordered world – Bazarov's nihilism revolutionized, but also confirmed, the maskilic beliefs of the troubled and rebellious Jewish youth. Thus was born the *maskilic nihilist*, whose Jewish blend of nihilism differed from the Russian original in that, on the one hand, it valued above all else the prospect of a perfect society through education, science, and good work, and that, on the other, it rejected political radicalization in favour of peaceful, cultural activity.

There is no need to dwell any further on the intricate connection between the Haskalah and nihilism, and how 'the "Nihilists" emerged as an astonishing phenomenon in the Jewish world'.⁴⁷ Our biographical sketches of Natanson, Zundeleovich, Liberman, Aptekman, Tsukerman and others give ample information on this uniquely Jewish process which either preceded or coincided with their initial radicalization. Yet, all these 'would-be Pisarevs' soon became socialists of Populist persuasion. How did they accomplish this saltus? Are we to assume that these Jewish nihilists performed the incredible feat of jumping over their own shadow, that all the things which facilitated and shaped their *Jewish* adoption of nihilism proved inconsequential later on, and therefore were absent in Populism?

The way Jews absorbed and practised nihilism as Jews has often been contrasted with their difficulties in relating to its ideological successor, Populism. As Jonathan Frankel writes, 'the "going to the people," of the 1870s ... placed the Jewish "intelligent", who had worn the mantle of the nihilist easily enough, in a serious dilemma While it was possible to produce a Jewish Bazarov, a Jewish *muzhik* was a rare and strange find'.⁴⁸ This, of course, is the already familiar argument of Jewish historians in general, and of Tscherikower in particular, who most forcefully made the point when he wrote:

for all his ability to adapt himself to prevailing radical theories, the very spirit of narodnik ideology – its slavophil roots, its religion, and its belief in peasant *buntarstvo* – remained inaccessible to the Jewish intellectuals' innermost being. Jews did not have the [same] sort of 'noble penitence' and did not feel a 'debt to the people'. For them the Russian *obshchina* had been a purely theoretical concept. Also alien to them was the whole style and traditions associated with Pugachev and Stenka Razin.⁴⁹

The apparent dilemma of 'Russianness' versus 'Jewishness' in the adoption of *narodnik* ideology did not, however, discourage Jews from joining the Populist movement in large numbers. Their rate of participation in the movement quadrupled from roughly 5 per cent in the early 1870s to about 20 per cent in the mid-1880s; and, besides, there were numerous 'Jewish generals' in the Populist leadership of this period such as, for example, Natanson, Ginzburg, and Zundeleovich. Thus, while it can be argued with good reason that nihilism was closer to the psyche of the maskilic Jewish youth than Populism, this evidently did not prevent them from being equally attracted to the Populist manifestations of Russian radicalism. How is one to explain this paradox?

Without belittling the complexity of the problem, its resolution is not that difficult. Obviously, Populism, as perceived by the Jewish *narodnik*, cannot have been such an alien ideology as it may appear on the surface. For otherwise we should have to submit to the unlikely assumption that he was hopelessly schizophrenic in adopting Russian 'radical theories' which contradicted his Jewishness. A more likely explanation of why a Jewish nihilist became a Populist is to be found in his *creative*, rather than imitative, ability to adapt Populist ideology to his own way of thinking and system of values.

The most conspicuous and historically significant instance of such adaptation is Mark Natanson, of course. There was no radical break with his Jewish blend of nihilism once he came under the influence of Populist literature. On the contrary, his 'Populism' evolved organically out of his previously held nihilist convictions in much the same fashion as the latter were linked to his Jewish background and maskilic upbringing. Due to this, the conclusions he derived from reading Lavrov's *Historical Letters* differed markedly from those of Russian radical contemporaries who interpreted the *Letters* as a moral imperative to pay their 'debt to the People' through social action in the village.

Although the *Letters* did not specifically advocate 'going to the people', this was the message which young Russian radicals derived from Lavrov's concept of 'the irredeemable debt to the people owed by the Russian intelligentsia'.⁵⁰ Judging from Natanson's programme of 1870 and his subsequent views as a Populist revolutionary, he shared neither the Russian intelligentsia's notion of repentance nor their romantic identification with 'the people'. What appealed to Natanson was not the universally acclaimed Populist message of the *Letters*, but the fact that Lavrov went beyond the nihilist individualism of the 1860s without, however, negating the positivist rationale of social progress as preached by Pisarev. As spelled out in his programme, Natanson's new socialist *Weltanschauung* was really an amalgamation of nihilist and Populist ideas

– an amalgamation that was uniquely Jewish in origin and for this reason also observable in other radical Jews of his generation.

Natanson's nihilist-Populism offers the clearest indication that – as in the case of nihilism – Jewish Populists were a distinct breed of radicals because of their Jewishness. In their maskilic appreciation for modern education, European culture, and humanistic universality, they never ceased to be nihilists in the depth of their heart, and, in practice, this also delayed their conversion to Populist socialism. Nihilism, especially in its Pisarevian expression, not only retained its hold on Jewish *intelligently* much longer than it did on their Russian counterparts, but in fact became part and parcel of their Populist outlook in the 1870s. Hence, they never really abandoned nihilism, which corresponded closely with their own specifically Jewish experience and psychological disposition. Instead, like Natanson, they combined it with Lavrovism, whose historiosophy of social progress was ideally suited to transform individualistic-minded idealists into collectivist socialist activists.

In this process, the Bakuninist version of Populism – not to mention its Nechaevist variant – became much less influential among Jews since, unlike Lavrovism, it contradicted their nihilist frame of mind and could thus not have facilitated their transition from nihilism to Populism. Of course, this is true also with respect to many Russian nihilists who turned Populist under the influence of Lavrov. But while they proceeded to convert his *Letters* into a 'Populist tract',⁵¹ the *Jewish* nihilist adapted his ideas to suit his own world of experience that was neither ethnically nor socially Russian. This meant that he lacked the typical traits which characterized his Gentile comrades' ethnocentric peasant socialism: he continued to value knowledge as a source of progress, he remained a cosmopolitan of Western orientation, and – most characteristically – he was not motivated by the moral imperative of being 'indebted' to the people.

Even Osip Aptekman, 'one of the most honest and enthusiastic *narodniki*, internally the most assimilated', was indifferent to the Populist morality of repentance. 'In me', he wrote, 'there was no trace of penitential feeling. And, indeed, how could it have originated in me? On the contrary, as a member of an oppressed nationality, I would rather have expected to present the bill of payment, than to repay some kind of fantastic debt.'⁵² For him the Russian peasant was an object of pity whom he was obliged to serve in the name of socialism as prescribed by his own evangelical ethics.

The same ethics, albeit less overtly religious, were at work in most Jewish Populists who strove to create a new Jerusalem that would benefit all of mankind. It is this motif, with all its existential implications, which

offers the key to why Populism, in spite of its alleged 'Russianness', proved equally, if not more, attractive than nihilism for alienated Jewish youngsters in search of a perfect world.

Although Populism was more remote than nihilism, both culturally and chronologically, from the Jewish sphere in which the Aptekmans, Deichs, Zundeleovichs, Epsteins, and Natansons were raised and imbued with varying degrees of Jewishness, the former made up for this distance in that it offered them more than the latter. What Populism gave them over and above nihilism was, simply put, *socialism*. Because this is what Populism really meant to them. Its 'Russianness' was immaterial in this respect. As a secular utopia, as a new form of existence and morality, it gave them a sense of immediate purpose, community, and existential fulfilment. Nihilism had served them well in their maskilic, individualistic desire to emancipate themselves from their religious-traditionalist bound Jewish society. But it had left them frustrated, isolated, and marginal in trying to transform themselves and the Jewish people into universal citizens in the image of modern European culture. In socialism, regardless of its Populist form, they discovered a philosophy of social action which was concerned with the collective rather than the individual, the 'emotional' rather than the 'rational', and 'the people' rather than the 'critically thinking' intelligentsia. While Aptekman's 'Christian socialism' captures very well the underlying religious-existential motif of this shift to socialism, it is Akselrod who best exemplifies the Jewish radical's infatuation with the new grandiose perspectives of building 'churches of the future' which would 'conquer the whole world' and establish 'universal brotherhood'.

Contrary to conventional interpretations, Populism *qua* socialism was therefore not at all an alien ideology for Jewish radicals. If anything, the new teachings revolutionized them and attracted scores of others who sought to escape their personal unhappiness by creating a world of 'universal happiness, freedom and equality'. That they, along with the Russian *narodniki*, should turn to 'the people' – the Russian peasantry – to achieve the millennium was not an ideological apparition contradicting their Jewish cosmopolitanism. For obviously, in Russia, it made sense politically that the peasantry more than any other people, including the Jews, should be the locomotive of social-revolutionary change.

This is not to deny that the Jewish *narodnik* was also influenced by the Populist belief in the purifying chemistry of physical labour, and that people engaged in this sort of travail, the peasants, were the natural allies in forging a socialist utopia.⁵³ But his own motives in fighting for, and dreaming of, such an utopia were not dependent on 'the people' or the Populist ethos in general. Neither was an essential ingredient in his

socialist *Weltanschauung*, which was shaped by different traditions, conflicts, and aspirations than that of the Russian *intelligent*. What mattered most for the Jewish radical was that this *intelligent* was *his* natural ally and that, in the 1870s, Russian revolutionary Populism was the only existing vehicle which he could board to express his discontent and idealism. This, however, did not make him a typical Populist of Russian vintage. For, as we have seen, there was enough diversity and flux in Russian Populism that would allow him to join and even influence revolutionary circles according to his own nihilist-Populist preferences as a Jewish *narodnik*.

Part 2

The Land and Freedom Party: Jews and the politicization of revolutionary Populism, 1875–1879

The ‘going to the people’ movement was the high-point of revolutionary activity and optimism in the first half of the 1870s; it was the crest of that wave of Populist radicalism which had formed in 1869–71 and which quickly subsided in 1874–75. In its wake followed profound disillusionment. From the height of utopian expectations the ‘lovers of the people’ were plunged into a state of utter despondency. Their euphoric enterprise had collapsed in the face of police repression, peasant inertia and, last but not least, the xenophobic hostility of the masses with whom they wanted to ‘merge’ in the expectation of creating a new social order. For many this spelled temporarily, if not definitely, the end of their revolutionary career. Of the thousands who had participated in the pilgrimage, hundreds were imprisoned, scores died in their cells while awaiting trial, and still others, who had been lucky enough to escape detection or to gain early release due to lack of evidence against them, quietly abandoned the movement in disappointment at the unresponsive *narod*. In short, the movement had been crushed and there seemed little hope for its resurrection in the near future. All that remained were scattered remnants of die-hard, but disillusioned and disorganized, groups of radicals who had been sufficiently chastened to query their propagandistic endeavours which had produced nothing more than ephemeral outbursts of revolutionary energy. *Chto delat’* – what is to be done? – was the question they asked themselves throughout 1875 and well into the following year? Hence, this was a period of soul-searching, a period of transition when many Populists realized that, if there was any chance of continuing their work meaningfully, they would have to revise their ideas on how to organize and propagate their revolutionary mission.

It was at this crucial junction that Mark Natanson reappeared in St Petersburg after three years of exile. Picking up from where he had left off in 1871, Natanson continued his quest to build a ‘party of struggle’. His renewed effort rejuvenated the Populist movement and resulted in the creation of an organization – the Society of Land and Freedom

(*Zemlia i Volia*) – which was to dominate the Russian revolutionary scene between 1876 and 1879.

The historical significance of *Zemlia i Volia* was far reaching. It laid the foundation for two subsequent ‘parties’, the People’s Will (*Narodnaia Volia*) and the Black Partition (*Chernyi Peredel*), both of which were of great importance for the evolution of modern Russian revolutionary politics. Indeed, by stepping into the ‘revolutionary vacuum’ of 1874–75, Natanson initiated a process that eventually led to the formation of three political parties – Liberal, neo-Populist, and Marxist – which seriously challenged tsarism in 1905 and destroyed it in 1917.

In explicating the momentous importance of Natanson as the founding father of *Zemlia i Volia*, we shall also illuminate the role of other Jewish ‘generals’ such as Lev Ginsburg, Osip Aptekman, and Aron Zundeleovich, who were instrumental in giving Populism a distinctly political direction. The terrorist implication of this direction constitutes still another important theme. Its discussion in the second chapter of this section brings to light not only the legacy of Natanson, but also the degree to which Zundeleovich and a host of lesser known Jewish revolutionaries contributed to the break-up of *Zemlia i Volia* in 1879 and the formation of *Chernyi Peredel* and *Narodnaia Volia* in the same year.

6 Jewish 'generals of revolution'

In 1875 Mark Natanson was by all accounts the *deus ex machina* who rescued the deeply troubled revolutionary movement. His arrival in St Petersburg electrified the local radical community. The mere presence of this man, who still enjoyed an enormous fund of prestige and trust among his erstwhile Chaikovskyst friends, charged the survivors of the 'crazy summer' of 1874 with a renewed sense of optimism, with the hope that not all had been lost and that a new beginning was in the offing. The general sentiment has best been expressed by Lev Deich who wrote in his memoirs that, 'just then, when the movement was disintegrating and when nobody knew how to resurrect it, there – the suddenly appearing Natanson ... was looked upon by many as an anchor of salvation or as a guiding light'. And, being active at that time in Kiev, he vividly recalled how radicals from St Petersburg were saying: 'Well, now everything will be going along the right track – Mark is organizing again. He will unite everybody.'¹

In spite of the acknowledged prominence of Natanson in rebuilding the disabled movement in the form of a new revolutionary organization known as Zemlia i Volia, the formative history of this party has remained an elusive subject. Except for recognizing the genius of Mark Natanson in forming the original nucleus of Zemlia i Volia, historians tell us little about its genesis and even less about Natanson's role in it.² While it is no easy task to explain the early history of Zemlia i Volia due to lack of sources (especially for the crucial period of 1875–76), too much is made of the excuse that 'the traces left by a conspiracy, even such an extensive one [as Zemlia i Volia], are always few' – and that, consequently, we must content ourselves with the basic facts that Zemlia i Volia originated some time in 1875–76, and that its founder was Mark Natanson.³ Surely, the knowledge that Natanson's arrival in St Petersburg heralded the beginning of a new phase in the history of revolutionary Populism should have prompted scholars to analyse closely the 'mechanics' of this 'veritable *deus ex machina* of Russian radicalism'.⁴ But oblivious to the revolutionary role of Jews as embodied *par excellence* in Natanson, they

have yet to come forth with a satisfactory account of the evolution of Zemlia i Volia. In lieu of it, let us try to piece together the remarkable story 'how and why' a Jew created Russia's first truly revolutionary party.

As we know, Mark Natanson had been arrested in the fall of 1871 due to his *knizhnoe delo* which he had initiated, and which had provided the 'institutional framework' for his first historical achievement, the Chaikovskii circle. His subsequent years of exile, at first in the provinces of Arkhangelsk and Voronezh and then in Finland, finally came to an end in December 1874 when he was released from police surveillance and was apparently permitted to reside in St Petersburg again. But family obligations, and most probably also his justified suspicion that he was still being secretly watched, made him delay his return until the spring or perhaps early summer of 1875. However, immediately upon his arrival he started his proverbial 'gathering-in' of dispersed groups and individuals which earned him the distinction of being jokingly called 'Ivan Kalita, the gatherer of Russian lands'.⁵

Natanson concentrated his efforts first of all on St Petersburg where, in spite of large-scale persecutions, there still existed a sizeable revolutionary community largely made up of Lavrovists and former Chaikovtsy. Completely unaffected by the prevailing pessimism in revolutionary circles, Natanson was bound to attract a following among discouraged but kindred spirits. His unbridled determination to reconstitute the shattered movement, to chart a new course of action, quickly won him the support of those Chaikovskyist veterans who knew him and still admired him for his past achievements which had shown him to be a man of unusual qualities and moral integrity. They congregated around him and, within a short time of his arrival Natanson had formed a circle under his leadership which served as the nucleus of another revolutionary society.⁶

We are fortunate to have an account of this group in the memoirs of Pavel Akselrod, who participated in its affairs for several weeks in the fall of 1875. Noting that 'Natanson, a person steeled in revolutionary work, was the recognized head of the circle', he writes that its members 'lived for one purpose only: to gather again the scattered forces and resume revolutionary work ...'. Neither Lavrov nor Bakunin determined their thinking and activity. Disillusioned with 'flying propaganda' (*letuchaia propaganda*) and buntarist agitation (*vspyshkopuskatel'stvo*), they sought to organize 'compact social-revolutionary settlements' for systematically propagandizing 'the people' in a politically realistic fashion. All agreed that this 'required an organization with a leading centre – its creation was

needed above all else!' Vividly recalling the degree to which the circle was absorbed by 'organizational tasks', Akselrod unequivocally states: 'This, then, was the work occupying that circle which I entered in St Petersburg; this was the innovating group [*initsiativnaia grupp*a] whose labours subsequently gave rise to "Zemlia i Volia".'⁷

These first-hand observations are extremely valuable. They not only confirm the existence of a new vibrant organization in the name of Natanson probably as early as August 1875, but they also highlight the fact that this was the embryo of Zemlia i Volia manifesting already some of its principal characteristics. Chastened by the experience of the *v narod* movement, its members accepted the ideas of Natanson – systematic propaganda and organizational unity – which became the hallmark of their developing 'revolutionary army'.⁸

The Natansonovtsy scored their first success in November 1875 when, together with the St Petersburg Lavrovists of Lev Ginzburg's circle, they formed the Union of Russian Revolutionary Groups. Although the Union lasted for only six months, it was an important stage in the evolution of Zemlia i Volia. It signified the transformation of the Natansonovtsy from an ordinary, traditional circle of radicals into a well structured organization with a programmatic platform that made it a genuine *party* of revolutionary Populism. By the same token, it signified the realization of Natanson's pragmatic, party-political ideas which he had formulated in 1870–71, but which his comrades had ignored after 1872. Moreover – and quite apart from vindicating the centrality of the Natanson circle as an entity capable of negotiating unification with other groups – the 'rise and fall of the Union'⁹ reveals succinctly not only the crucial role of Natanson, but also that of other Jewish revolutionaries in the formative history of Zemlia i Volia.

Besides his own following of former Chaikovtsy that included Anna Epshtein and Aron Zundeleovich (and for a short time Akselrod), Natanson also found a close ally in Lev Savelevich Ginzburg (1851–1916). This much neglected leader of the Lavrovist faction in Russia has only recently received his deserved attention in the writings of Boris Sapir, who says of him: 'While [Valerian] Smirnov held first place after Lavrov in the *Vpered* hierarchy among the *émigrés*, the acknowledged head of the Lavrovists inside Russia was Ginzburg ... [who] often acted as the leader of the entire Lavrovist tendency, rivalling thereby the role of Lavrov himself.'¹⁰

As the leading Lavrovist inside Russia, Ginzburg also rivalled Mark Natanson. Though less radical than the latter, Ginzburg's contribution to the revolutionary movement between 1872 and 1876 was equally significant. Like Natanson, he had the ability to attract people and weld

them into a closely-knit circle whose financial support and organizational strength enabled Lavrov to launch his highly influential socialist journal *Vpered!* in 1873 and maintain it for several years. As the recognized head of the St Petersburg Vperedovtsy, Ginzburg was largely responsible for creating this infrastructure and deserves much of the credit for making Lavrovism one of the principal ideological currents in revolutionary Populism.

Another similarity between Natanson and Ginzburg relates to their shared Jewish background, which fostered in both a socialism that was not identical with the ethnocentric peasantry of their Russian comrades. The Ginzburgs, who apparently owned a small business in Chernigov, harboured strong maskilic sentiments which derived from the German-Jewish Haskalah.¹¹ They gave their child an education in the Chernigov gymnasium, where he impressed his schoolmates with his knowledge of German literature and Kantian philosophy, both of which he studied in the original. But he was also known for his scientific bent of mind. According to a childhood friend of his, Ieronim Iasinskii, he 'loved exactness ... and relied on facts only'. A serious and gifted student, there was no doubt in Iasinskii's mind that Lev would have a 'brilliant scholarly career'.¹² Although he eventually became a zemstvo doctor practising dentistry, this was not the road he chose to travel then. He was diverted along a different path when the nihilist 'Enlightenment' and Lavrov's *Historical Letters* superseded his homegrown maskilic *Weltanschauung*: nihilism suited his predilection for scientific thinking and solutions; Lavrovism harmonized perfectly with his Kantian idealism and its ethical imperatives. Together they turned him into a socialist radical via gymnasium and university circles dedicated to 'self-education' in the name of universal social progress.¹³

It seems that in 1870–71 Ginzburg was already a committed socialist in the Natansonist mould. Having graduated from the Chernigov gymnasium he enrolled at the St Petersburg Medical-Surgical Academy in 1869. Here, in the same year, Ginzburg met Natanson for the first time and began to interact with his group of future Chaikovtsy. Though not a member of this congregation, he participated in Natanson's *knizhnoe delo* and organized a circle in support of it. With Natanson's arrest in 1871, and the Chaikovtsy's Bakuninist radicalization thereafter, Ginzburg's circle began to stake out its distinct place in the revolutionary movement: operating their own *knizhnoe delo*, the publication and distribution of Lavrov's *Vpered!*, its members came to be known as Lavrovist in 1873–74.

That Ginzburg would cooperate and eventually join forces with Natanson in 1875 was therefore not an unexpected development. For in

addition to their earlier acquaintance in 1869–71, there was the equally strong bond of common interest which, especially since the publication of *Vpered!* in 1873, made for close contacts between Ginzburg's people and those Chaikovtsy who joined Natanson's second circle. Operating in the same milieu as the latter and often depending on them for procuring and distributing literature from abroad, the Lavrovists – perhaps more than any other group of radicals – understood from early on the practical benefits of uniting the amorphous revolutionary groups into a more solid organization.¹⁴

Throughout the summer and fall of 1875 the Lavrovists and Natansonovtsy adamantly pursued the issue of unification. In order to find a *modus vivendi* and arrive at a common programme for merging *all* revolutionary groups, Lev Ginzburg, in consultation with Natanson, drafted and circulated a discussion paper which addressed the need to overcome the ideological and organizational disunity of the Populist movement. Attributing the dismal state of affairs to the outmoded organizational principle of circles based on 'personal relations' rather than a clear understanding of revolutionary ends and means, both parties agreed that for the sake of unity the 'old tradition of circles' must be superseded by a 'new system of organization' in which the personal 'subjective' element would be replaced by the 'principle of deed', that is, by objective practical requirements and utilitarian considerations.¹⁵ With Ginzburg's 'circular' serving as a basic document for negotiating unity, some twenty-five persons from both circles met almost daily for several weeks 'to put together a general programme and organization'.¹⁶

The *vozhak-organizator* (leader and organizer) of the whole negotiating enterprise was Natanson.¹⁷ Second in importance was Ginzburg. The role of Ginzburg was unwittingly, though misleadingly, acknowledged by former Chaikovtsy who opposed the projected Union of Russian Revolutionary Groups. Rejecting that 'mystical congress' of unification, they claimed that it would consist of hardly anyone else than 'Ginzburg and Epshtein, together with a few youngsters who don't understand what it's all about'.¹⁸ That Anna Epshtein should have been mentioned in this connection shows that she too was intimately involved in the negotiations. The same applies to her protégé Zundeleovich, who strongly supported the idea of a union, and after its realization became its 'official representative managing the northern [transportation] route' via Königsberg.¹⁹

In order to appreciate Epshtein's and Zundeleovich's role on the course of events it must be realized that they, together with Arkadii Finkelshtein, controlled the 'northern route' which handled the bulk of underground

literature shipped to Russia for distribution by the Lavrovists, Bakuninists, and Natansonovtsy. Although Finkelshtein and especially Epshtein had pioneered the establishment of this route, it was Zundelevich who really regularized its operations in 1875–76 and henceforth held all the threads in his hand – making him, in the words of Aleksandr Mikhailov, ‘the tsar of the frontier’.²⁰

The tremendous importance of recruiting Zundelevich did not escape the politically attentive Natanson. He visited the ‘tsar’ in Königsberg and found him fully prepared to join his organizational efforts which led to the creation of the Union. This greatly strengthened his own circle, which from now on enjoyed a near monopoly on communications between Russia and the West.

With Zundelevich’s extensive underground organization at their disposal, the Natansonovtsy controlled a network of illegal border crossings which connected them via Berlin, Königsberg and Vilna with the two most important centres of Russian revolutionary printing activity abroad, London and Geneva. This line of communication and its central transfer points for goods and people was manned almost exclusively by Jews. In the border region between Königsberg and Vilna, Jewish smugglers – chief among them Zalman and his family – took care of the revolutionary ware, conveying it across the frontier by all sorts of ingenious enterprise.²¹ Particularly sensitive and valuable items such as printing press accessories and, later on, dynamite were taken directly to St Petersburg by Zalman himself and sometimes by Zundelevich. But generally the ‘port of entry’ was Vilna, which since the days of the first Vilna circle served as the main post office for ‘red mail’ to and from Russia.²²

On the German side the ‘central transport agency’ forwarding the ‘red mail’ to the border crossing points was located in Königsberg. It was managed by Arkadii Finkelshtein who, with the help of fellow Jewish students, travelled the short distance to the frontier to hand over the contraband to German, Polish, and Lithuanian villagers working for the ‘Red Shmul’, as Zalman was familiarly known to the smugglers.²³ However, the linchpin of this whole operation, supervised by Zundelevich, was in Berlin.

There were several reasons why Berlin should have functioned as Zundelevich’s base of operation in Germany. The city was the major railroad junction for travel from central and western Europe to the Russo-Prussian frontier; it was the home of the burgeoning German social-democratic labour movement; and finally, but most importantly, it was the residence of many Russian-Jewish students. Here we meet again Grigorii Gurevich, Pavel Akselrod, Leizer Tsukerman, Vladimir

Iokhelson, Iosel Efron, Khasia Shur, Avgustina and Nadezhda Kaminer, Nakhman and Leizer Levental, and Semen Lure – all of whom had been active in Vilna, Mogilev, and Kiev, but who had decided, or had been forced, to leave Russia in 1874–75. In time-honoured fashion they lived communally and also formed a circle which, numbering some thirty individuals, 'worked under the leadership of Zundelevich and participated in the contraband transport of revolutionary literature across the Russian frontier'.²⁴

By the force of circumstances as well as inclination the members of the circle participated actively in what was then the most promising and best organized socialist party in Europe – German Social Democracy. Almost immediately upon their arrival in Berlin they got to know its leaders personally and developed a particularly close and lasting relationship with Eduard Bernstein. In the company of Karl Kautsky, Wilhelm Liebknecht and Bernstein, they attended workers' meetings and on many occasions took part in actual party work, which also included electioneering on behalf of the Social Democrats. The latter, in turn, assisted the 'Jewish nihilist' in feeding the Russian revolutionary movement with a steady stream of agitational material.²⁵

In the main, this support consisted of putting Social Democratic facilities and addresses at Zundelevich's disposal. Revolutionary literature from Geneva and London was sent to the social-democratic publishing house Volksstaat in Leipzig and then mailed to Berlin for repacking on the premises of a business owned by the Bernshteins. Conspiratorial addresses, often using a social-democratic cover, were used to inform Zundelevich and his people in Königsberg and elsewhere along the border that transports were on their way from Berlin. All this was done so well that neither the German nor the Russian police had much success in seizing transports channelled through Zundelevich's elaborated system of 'underground agencies', of which Berlin, due to its central location and the cooperation of Jewish and German socialists, was *di hoypt-stantsie* – the headquarters of operations.²⁶

The chief or 'postmaster general' was of course Zundelevich. In addition to the transport of illegal literature, he utilized his lines of communication for almost any kind of conspiratorial enterprise such as, for example, carrying secret correspondence, conveying printing presses purchased abroad, and, last but not least, shuttling revolutionaries to and fro between Russia and Western Europe. When Natanson visited Zundelevich in the fall of 1875 most of this underground infrastructure was already well in place.

Evidently, in his capacity as 'minister of communications' serving all revolutionary groups, Zundelevich along with Epshtein was in an

excellent position to mediate between the various factions as the confidant of Natanson. This was especially true with respect to the Lavrovists, who were particularly close to them personally and as clients of their contraband business. Trusted by both factions, they were able to play a key role in the *rapprochement* between the Lavrovists and Natansonovtsy which, in November 1875, led to the formation of a Union of Russian Revolutionary Groups headed by the two 'Jewish generals' – Ginzburg and Natanson.

In December Natanson went on a round trip abroad to seek allies for the Union and, more specifically, to inform the editors of *Vpered!*, Peter Lavrov and Valerian Smirnov, about the resolutions adopted at the unification congress. Reminiscing many years later about Natanson's visit, Lavrov recalled that

there appeared in London one of the greatest and ablest of the organizers of those [former] 'Chaikovtsy' ... He brought a plan for joint activity with the 'Vperedovtsy' ... This plan was received with great sympathy, it was discussed and elaborated in detail, and in a very friendly manner. Knowing the respect and attention which this person [Natanson] enjoyed in Russia, the editors of *Vpered!* were convinced that common federated activity with a division of labour between the groups could constitute a durable basis, and they [the editors] parted from their visitor with great hopes.²⁷

The 'plan' discussed was the 'Unionist programme' of November 1875. Natanson told the editors that the programme had resolved (a) the question of organization by federally uniting 'independent groups' through the creation of *central institutions* such as 'a common fund' and a federal bureau, and (b) the question of propaganda in favour of territorially concentrated *agitation* or 'propaganda by deed'. As he explained, 'propagandizing on the basis of facts, agitating and recruiting on the basis of deed [*na dele*]' would mobilize 'the people more quickly towards the desired result [of revolution]'.²⁸

Lavrov was generally pleased with the 'programme' and felt that with Natanson charting the course of the Union it had good prospects for the future. To him, the whole enterprise was a 'decent organization, with a proper element of centralism'. For all his reservations regarding his place in the Union as editor of *Vpered!* and the 'dreadful hurry' with which Natanson pursued his objectives, Lavrov clearly sensed that something serious was in the making.²⁹ True, the hope with which he invested Natanson's mission was misplaced since it never materialized in the sense he had envisaged, but his sure instinct and experience in revolutionary affairs enabled him to recognize the potential of Natanson's leadership and the plan which he had brought to London. This plan, it should be

noted already now, contained almost all the principal tenets of the future programme of Zemlia i Volia: 'agitation by deed', 'revolutionary settlements', and centralized organization.

The general optimism which Natanson's visit caused in London was not, however, shared by Smirnov who privately reacted extremely negatively towards the Union and its official spokesman. Noting that Lavrov was fairly impressed by Natanson and his 'whole plan', Smirnov confessed to 'the first lady of the Lavrovists', the Jewess Rozaliia Idelson (1848–1915?), who then was residing in Bern, that the Union was bound to fail because of its Bakuninist radicalism which, he argued, was obvious in all that Natanson had to say about Russian revolutionary affairs.³⁰ His impression of Natanson was that, while 'he is a very clever, [and] apparently also a very well-meaning person, his mood, like the mood of the youth in general, is such that [he] demands action and action now, that, while not denying the importance of general propaganda [he] demands that we rely wholly on organization and agitation'.³¹

Though apparently harbouring no personal dislike for Natanson, Smirnov rudely castigated him and the Union as Bakuninist and, consequently, as harmful to the development of Russian socialism. The latter, in his opinion, required 'preparatory propaganda' rather than 'agitation by deed' which was implicitly political in its demand to organize 'rebellions' and 'demonstrations'. With acute foresight he concluded that if the Union were led by men like Natanson, who conveyed the conviction that 'procurators, policemen, landowners and everyone else is in sympathy with the revolution', he and his friends could be sure that 'a political and not a social movement will be realized in Russia, that a constitution is near – and that we are among those who facilitated and, if you wish, called forth this constitutional movement'.³²

Smirnov's critique is not without merit in its penetrating assessment of the political implications of Natanson's supposedly 'Bakuninist plan'. Indeed, he deserves full credit for recognizing that organization and agitation *à la* Natanson would, in practice, result in a *political* rather than *social* movement, and that this would eventually lead to the realization of constitutional rather than socialist aspirations in Russia. Smirnov was wrong, though, when in ideological zeal he labelled Natanson a 'Bakuninist'.

Natanson was neither a Bakuninist nor a Lavrovist. He was influenced by these ideologies only insofar as he chose to appropriate those ideas which suited his own unique perception of Russian socio-political reality. From Lavrov he retained the idea that it is the individual's moral duty to act on behalf of 'the people', and that this required the creation of 'a truly popular socialist party'.³³ From Bakunin he probably derived the belief

that 'agitation by deed' was the most expedient method of politicizing the people to fight against tsarist oppression. But the manner in which he synthesized their ideas was, as in his Chaikovskyst days, determined by his own nihilist-Populism, which was more radical and political than Lavrov's preparatory philosophy, yet less romantic and social-revolutionary than Bakunin's anarchist *buntarstvo*. Actually, if one were to define Natanson's 'populism' in terms of the two principal tenets of Populist ideology, that social revolution was the opposite of politics and that socialism was historically and spiritually a property of the Russian peasantry, one must conclude that he was decidedly less Populist than the followers of Lavrov who stressed the former principle and those of Bakunin who embraced both, and who were particularly enamoured with the latter.

This fine, but crucial, distinction in Natanson's revolutionary *Weltanschauung* was as much lost on Smirnov as it was on latter-day commentators. Incapable of seeing anything positive in the pragmatic shift from preparatory propaganda to political agitation, from ideological purity to organizational priorities, Smirnov consoled himself by telling his confidant: 'N[atanson] has a terrible theoretical muddle in his head. I quarrelled with him extensively ... It is clear that N[atanson] is now the hero of the day and the *vozhak-organizator*. I do not envy those who follow him. He could gain from clarifying his ideas a bit ... Well, as is usually the case, talking does not help at all, let life itself open his eyes.'³⁴ But, alas, as 'life itself' was to prove, the 'theoretical muddle' invigorated the revolutionary movement in which, due to their ideological dogmatism, Smirnov and the Lavrovists soon became an extinct species.

After Natanson's return from London, relations between his and Ginzburg's group became strained and quickly deteriorated to the point where the latter decided to withdraw from the Union. In justifying their decision, the Lavrovists accused Natanson of having misrepresented the 'Unionist programme' in London to further his own ambitions: namely, to seize control of the Union and impose his radical brand of revolutionary practice. Succeeding on both accounts, the Union had become the preserve of radicals who, the Lavrovists claimed, no longer honoured the agreed programme of cooperation.³⁵

The truth of the matter is that Ginzburg and his fellow Lavrovists failed to comprehend the politics and dynamics of Natanson's drive to unify all revolutionary groups into one, relatively centralized, organization that was to evolve its *own* programme and publish its *own* journal to reflect and propagate its vision of revolutionary action.³⁶ Unable to grasp Natanson's 'plan' of unification, they wrongfully equated his efforts to strengthen the Union in terms of centralization and mem-

bership (recruiting 'arrant rebels') with perpetrating the 'old tradition of circles'. Actually, the Lavrovists themselves were at fault. Politically naive, they had completely miscalculated in believing that unification would strengthen their own group and secure the preeminence of *Vpered!* as a leading organ of Russian Populism. Quite simply, they had made this calculation without Natanson's charisma and activism. His radical interpretation and determined implementation of the Union's November resolutions had set into motion a process of expansion, consolidation, and pragmatic ideological renovation that went far beyond their social-revolutionary conceptions – and, in the end, reduced them to a minority within the Union, which, in effect, had become an extended version of his own circle. Fearing for their corporate and ideological entity, they sought to escape their predicament by leaving the Union altogether.³⁷

Ironically, while Smirnov was undoubtedly pleased to hear that his St Petersburg friends finally saw what he had seen all along, Lavrov strongly disapproved of the path chosen by the Ginzburg circle. More realistic than they, he thought it natural that in the scheme of things which Natanson had initiated the radicals were bound to dominate by virtue of the fact that they represented the majority in the revolutionary movement as a whole. For him organization *à la* Natanson was more important than ideological consistency. So much so that, within a year of his followers' renunciation of the Union this organizational question led to Lavrov's renunciation of the Ginzburg circle.³⁸

The rupture between Lavrov and Lev Ginzburg, following the break-up of the Union in the spring of 1876, also signifies the beginning of a pronounced ideological divergence between the two. This separation, as well as Ginzburg's refusal to condone Natanson's designs for the revolutionary movement, show him at once as a man of intellectual aptitude whose thinking did not coincide with Populist dogmas, and of political ineptitude whose sense of moderation did not allow him to comprehend the revolutionary dynamic of the second half of the 1870s. The latter sprang from his apolitical personality; the former derived from his Jewish heritage.

As noted already, Ginzburg was an intelligent and pragmatic activist who, in 1870–71, was drawn to Natanson's practical interpretation of Lavrov's socialist ideas. His Lavrovism lacked the typical Populist element of investing all efforts and hopes for the realization of socialism in the *narod*. For Ginzburg, as for Natanson, organization and propaganda in the midst of *intelligenty* and semi-educated workers, rather than the peasants, defined the focus of his activity. Never a believer in the

revolutionary readiness and communistic instincts of the peasantry, but an 'attentive and sober observer of Russian life, whose eyes discerned and whose pen described with astonishing clarity the headway made by capitalism in Russia',³⁹ he completely abandoned 'the people' and, in 1876-77, turned his whole attention to the urban worker.

In fact, during this period, Ginzburg and his immediate St Petersburg following ceased to be Populist altogether and came to be known as Russia's first 'Social Democrats'.⁴⁰ For Ginzburg had also begun to question the Populist dogmas of communal versus private ownership and social revolution versus political reform. The latter is particularly interesting because it indicates that, in contrast to Lavrov and Populists in general, he took seriously the idea that liberalism and its goal of political freedom was not such a bad thing since it might very well benefit the socialists in promoting, perhaps on a legal basis, socialism and the organization of 'revolutionary forces'. This was indeed a novel perception in Populist circles, well ahead of similar conceptions adopted later on by Narodnaia Volia and subsequently reinterpreted in Marxist fashion by Georgii Plekhanov and his predominantly Jewish Emancipation of Labour Group in 1883-84. Yet, while Ginzburg made this rare flight into the future and came close to the view that 'a political renovation of Russia must precede the country's socialist transformation', he did not draw the logical conclusion that, as a socialist, he could struggle for political liberties and constitutional rights without forsaking his socialist convictions. Separating the two, he and his comrades preferred to leave the task of winning 'bourgeois liberties' to others, while devoting themselves 'zealously to socialist propaganda among urban workers in order to organize them into a workers' party' - an activity and ideal that was guided, above all else, by the example of German Social Democracy.⁴¹

In taking a fresh look at the political and social situation in Russia, Ginzburg liberated his group from the ideological tutelage of Lavrov and led it away from its native Populist sources to foreign, especially German, wells of inspiration. For someone raised in the spirit of the Haskalah emanating from Berlin and nourished by the Königsberg philosophy of Kant, this was a natural and familiar route to travel. Politically, however, this turned out to be a disastrous journey. It diverted his followers away from the high road of revolution to a side street which in the 1870s was bound to lead to nowhere. Being neither Populist-socialists nor political activists, the former pupils of Lavrov found themselves isolated from mainstream revolutionary Populism and soon disappeared from the scene of this movement, which, instead of fostering a social-democratic consciousness among the workers, 'sought ways and means of over-

throwing Tsarism'.⁴² The first act of this suicidal drama was played out, of course, when the Lavrovists decided to separate from the Union because their 'general', Ginzburg, could no longer stomach the politics of Natanson.

What we witness in the persons of Natanson and Ginzburg is essentially a clash between two diametrically opposed personalities – between a man of action, incredibly dynamic and largely impervious to the hidden dangers of activism *per se*; and a man of moderation, highly sensitive to any form of conspiracy and political adventurism that seemed to undermine the morale and morality of the revolutionary movement. While this contrast was not overtly apparent in 1869–71, when Natanson himself was put on the defensive against the sort of activism – Nechaevshchina – which ran counter to Ginzburg's whole being, the same cannot be said when they met again years later under changed circumstances. The Union affair gave Ginzburg ample opportunity to observe at first hand the political nature of Natanson's activism. To Ginzburg's horror, it was Natanson who, this time, appeared to be the reincarnation of Nechaev with his unabashed demand for centralization, agitation, and conspiratorial secrecy.

That Natanson was a socialist *homo politicus* who had always thought of organization and propaganda in political rather than absolute social-revolutionary terms remained incomprehensible to Ginzburg. Admiring the Natanson of an earlier period, he was incapable of appreciating that his erstwhile comrade was not a convert to Bakuninism, but had undergone an evolution in thought and action which now, in 1875–76, brought forth succinctly the party-political imperative that had been at the core of Natanson's thinking and programmatic pronouncements of 1870.

On Natanson's return from exile in 1875, things looked quite different from the way they did in 1871. On the positive side, there was now a sizeable pool of 'critically thinking individuals' – conscious socialist radicals ready to follow their revolutionary calling as demanded by Lavrov. Generally speaking, the radicalization of students since 1868–69 had been so rapid that 'preparation' was no longer a priority. On the negative side, the 'going to the people' movement had jeopardized the promising beginnings of Natanson's pragmatic revolutionary strategy. Against his advice, his comrades had ignored the need to concentrate their efforts on improving organizationally and intellectually the quality of the Chaikovskii circle for the impending conflict with the tsarist government. Due to their reckless propaganda among workers and peasants, they had not only contributed to the disintegration of the circle, but had also challenged the authorities prematurely. Therefore, the

situation in 1875 was such that, while there were many persons committed to the cause, there was as yet no organized party strong enough to counteract the government's suppression of revolutionary activity.

Obviously, now was the time to create the 'party of struggle' of which Natanson had already spoken in 1870. Such a party would enlist popular support by propagating socialism on the basis of political and economic interests as perceived by 'the people' themselves, and by presenting itself to society at large as a credible, militant political opposition capable of withstanding the 'forces of reaction'. The Union and Natanson's plan to adopt 'propaganda by deed' and a 'proper element of centralism' were the first steps in this overall objective of renewing the revolutionary drive in Russia.

That Natanson eclipsed Ginzburg in leading the revolutionary movement should not, however, blind us to Ginzburg's crucial role in the politicization of Populism. The Union and its 'new system of organization' marked the beginning of this process. Along with Natanson, he laid the foundation for a revolutionary party which in 1881 sought to bring political liberty to Russia by assassinating Alexander II. It was Natanson's – and, by default, Ginzburg's – first solid achievement in rebuilding the shattered revolutionary movement in accordance with the architectural principles of his 'plan': pragmatism, agitation, centralization. Ironically, Ginzburg inadvertently helped to produce the blueprint for Natanson's plan of construction and, initially, put his resources into what appeared to be a joint enterprise. Thus, unintentionally, he facilitated the transformation of the Natanson circle into a fairly large and relatively well-organized Society of Northern Populists – indeed, a 'militant organization' which soon came to be known as *Zemlia i Volia*.

The change of name from Union of Russian Revolutionary Groups to Society of Northern Populists (or 'Northern Revolutionary-Populist Group') is indicative of Natanson's initial failure to gain concurrence for his plan of unification from the St Petersburg Lavrovists and also other revolutionary circles, especially in the south where the much more radical *buntari* strenuously objected to the idea of centralization. With the benefit of hindsight it is possible, however, to see that this failure was a blessing in disguise because it allowed for the organic growth of Natanson's embryonic organization which otherwise might have succumbed to internal dissension. No longer a motley collection of various groups and individuals, the Northern Populists could now concentrate on strengthening their society financially and organizationally. Declaring war on the proverbial 'broad Russian nature' – loose talk and care-

lessness in observing elementary conspiratorial precautions – Natanson and his closest associates strove to enforce strict discipline on their comrades.⁴³

Their success is apparent from the fact that in the summer of 1876 the followers of Natanson began also to be called Troglodytes, a name that was meant to convey the notion of people who, like cavemen, operated deep in the 'underground'.⁴⁴ Evidently, the Northern Populists conducted their work with great secrecy that was governed by a high, and previously unheard of, degree of caution. They had begun to develop professional techniques of revolutionary subversion – methods which, on the one hand, precluded careless propagandist activity and, on the other, facilitated the goal of organizational unity.

Equally important for the consolidation and growing influence of the society was Natanson's unabashed preoccupation with obtaining material necessities. He knew that his organization needed a sound financial basis to maintain its professional revolutionaries and to build up its underground infrastructure.⁴⁵ For this purpose he cultivated, as in his Chaikovskyst days, relations with liberals whom he knew to be in sympathy with the revolutionary cause and thus accessible to his quest for monetary donations. The very fact that Natanson himself, unlike most of his comrades, was not dogmatically opposed to constitutional aspirations probably enhanced his ability to solicit financial support from liberal quarters. Yet Natanson realized very well that such contributions were at best occasional and could not be relied upon to sustain large scale revolutionary activity.

In his search for a more secure source of income Natanson discovered a 'gold mine' in the person of Dmitrii Lizogub who had inherited a large estate worth some 200,000 rubles. The two men met for the first time in St Petersburg at the end of 1875, and it was there and then that Lizogub agreed to finance Natanson's organization. That Natanson rather than any other person or group was able to enlist Lizogub's support is in itself testimony to his popularity and ability as a leader who knew how to sell his ideas and how to elicit trust and loyalty from fellow radicals. For, while Lizogub was already predisposed to share his inheritance with the revolutionary movement, it took Natanson's foresight and persuasiveness to exploit this willingness for his own circle already at the time of its Unionist phase of development.⁴⁶

Due to these organizational and financial improvements the society had evolved by the fall of 1876 into a 'fairly big organization' which commanded the respect of revolutionary circles all over Russia. And since nothing succeeds as much as a combination of size, wealth, and organization, the society paved the way for unification by its sheer

strength. This was willy-nilly acknowledged by the provincial groups which increasingly gravitated towards the St Petersburg centre.⁴⁷

What was still missing, though, from the society, if it was to become a fully fledged party was a formal programme. This task was accomplished at a general meeting of Populist radicals in November 1876. The theoretical preamble of the new programme stated that revolutionary practice must correspond to the needs and wishes of the *Russian* people since 'a party can be strong and influential only when it bases itself on popular demands and does not violate historically produced economic and political ideals ...'. These ideals, it was asserted, were 'Land and Freedom' (*zemlia i volia*): 'this formula serves as the best expression of the people's views regarding the ownership of the land and the structuring of their communal life' and, therefore, is ideally suited to serve as 'the motto of a strong popular movement'. In a show of pragmatism, the authors of the programme concluded that in recognizing 'the impossibility ... of imbuing the people with other ideas, which might be better from an abstract [socialist] point of view, we have decided to inscribe on our banner the historically generated formula: "Zemlia i Volia"'.⁴⁸

This classical statement of Populist reasoning and tactical compromise was actually based on ideas which had already been articulated in the 'Unionist' programme. Indeed, the degree to which the new programme constituted a continuation of views formulated as early as September–November 1875 is particularly evident in its section dealing with how to mobilize 'the people' in recognition of their own interests in land and freedom. The means to be adopted were *agitation* and *settlement*, that is, the establishment of rural colonies of agitators who, by living among the peasants as doctors, midwives, and zemstvo employees, would support and radicalize the peasantry in its daily struggle against government officials and voracious landowners.⁴⁹ Similarly, the revolutionaries were to take up the cause of the urban workers. They must utilize the workers' economic dissatisfaction by organizing strikes and demonstrations, which would raise their level of socialist consciousness and, consequently, lead to their political radicalization. This sort of activity, both among peasants and workers, had to consist specifically in the 'streamlining and generalizing of popular strivings, in *agitation* in the broadest sense of this word, beginning with legal protests against local authorities and ending in armed uprisings, i.e., rebellions'.⁵⁰ Except for the programme's section on 'disorganization' (armed self-defence and infiltration of government institutions), these pronouncements resembled a 'maximalist' version of the old 'Unionist' programme as presented by Natanson to Lavrov and Smirnov in December 1875 – and,

subsequently, denounced by the Lavrovists upon their withdrawal from the Union.⁵¹

The 'Land and Freedom' programme of November 1876 was, in fact, the final product of ideas articulated a year before by Natanson. Together with his associates – both within the Union and in his own circle, and then in conflict with the Lavrovists – he elaborated these ideas systematically into a theory and practice for Zemlia i Volia, thus signifying the beginning of a new – indeed classical – phase in Populist activity.

This change of Populist tactics is a well-known fact, familiar to any student of Russian revolutionary history. What is not known, however, is the fact that, paradoxically, this change was spearheaded by a Jew, Natanson, who was more interested in improving the effectiveness of the revolutionary movement than upholding the ideological purity of Populism.⁵² Although the catch phrase 'Land and Freedom' served this purpose very well in that it appealed to the psychology of social revolutionaries, who desired to serve the people's cause as they construed it, the real meaning of the programme rests on its pragmatic declaration that revolutionary activity should be based on the economic needs and quasi-political aspirations of the *narod*. Tellingly enough, Natanson adopted the slogan not because it seemed to convey in two words all that the Populists stood for, but because it was politically advantageous to make it seem as if the new organization was heir to Russia's first revolutionary society after the Decembrist uprising – the Zemlia i Volia of 1862–63.⁵³

The November deliberations which led to the formulation of the 'Land and Freedom' programme did not, however, result in the immediate formation of a party by the name of Zemlia i Volia. This failure to create a unified party was due to sharp disagreements about the basic organizational questions. Ironically, if previously the Lavrovists had accused the Natansonovtsy of reverting to the 'old tradition of circles', it was now precisely for the contrary reason that many of the ideologically like-minded people who had gathered around Natanson to work out collectively a new programme found it impossible to endorse his 'practical business-like principle of organization' (*delovoi printsip organizatsii*).⁵⁴

According to Vera Figner's account of the final programmatic meeting, these disagreements came to head over the question of 'what criteria were to be used for recruiting new members'. The Natansonovtsy argued for a *broad* – as it were, 'business-like' – definition of membership based on merit, rather than personal and ideological criteria; their opponents insisted on a *narrow* definition based on a person's character and proven commitment to the cause. As neither was willing to compromise, no

agreement was forthcoming. Consequently, those opposing Natanson's concept of membership broke away from the Society and formed their own group of so-called 'Separatists'.⁵⁵

With the separatists going their own way, Natanson was free to pursue unhindered his own pragmatic course of organizing what was to become the party of Zemlia i Volia. He continued as forcefully as possible to institute a centralized organization that would correspond to the ideological and practical requirements of the 'Land and Freedom' programme. This was accomplished in January 1877 at another programmatic meeting which proved to be the actual founding congress of Zemlia i Volia. On this occasion Natanson succeeded in merging with his Society the prominent Rostov-Kharkov circle of Southern Narodniks, who had been in contact with the Natansonovtsy since the summer of 1876 but had been prevented from attending the November deliberations due to circumstances beyond their control.

The representatives of this circle, Osip Aptekman, Iuri Tishchenko, and Nikandr Moshchenko, came to St Petersburg at the end of January in order to discuss the 'Land and Freedom' programme and to negotiate cooperation with the Northern Populists. In relating his first encounter with Natanson, Aptekman has left us a detailed record of this historic event which, as he indicates, was dominated by the authoritative presence of Natanson:

On the second day of our arrival in St Petersburg Natanson visited us at the conspiratorial hide-out... There entered a man of higher than medium size, brown haired, a small silky beard, a high forehead, lively, intelligent, penetrating eyes, in general – an imposing figure... He invited me, Tishchenko, and Moshchenko to his place: 'Come to the constitutional conference. There is much, much work to be done...'. He said this in such a tone as if we had agreed already, and as if he had merely come to confirm the whole affair. We met in the evening. I only mention the final results of this nocturnal gathering – of *constitution*. Approval of the programme and its tactics. Acceptance of the regulations of the Society [*ustav obshchestva*] and its form of structure – *strict centralization*. Finally, confirmation of an already previously formulated plan of immediate tasks and the assignment of functions among the members of the society. The society was constituted.⁵⁶

The 'Land and Freedom' programme was readily approved by Aptekman and his comrades on 'first reading'. Equally important, they also agreed to the statutes drawn up by Natanson for regulating centrally the membership and organization of the Society.

The founding of Zemlia i Volia, the formal institutionalization of a Populist party, was thus 'officially' accomplished in January 1877. As Aptekman observed, the event was 'the culminating point of Natanson's

creative work'.⁵⁷ The truth of this statement, and its implied continuity of Natanson's 'creative work', is particularly obvious with respect to the centralist and functionalist principles which were to govern the activity of Zemlia i Volia. Their presence was already strikingly evident in his programme of 1870.

In it Natanson had clearly expressed his 'practical business-like principle of organization' when he detailed the need for a more or less centrally controlled division of labour that would ensure unity of purpose while taking into account the 'differentiated requirements' of revolutionary activity in different geographical locations, social classes, and special functions. The connection between sections and circles (*otdeli*), separated according to 'work specialization' (*spetsial'nosti*), was to be maintained by a 'general assembly' of revolutionaries who represented their respective circles. As the supreme council of the 'union', this assembly was responsible for coordinating the work of the *otdeli* and managing 'the financial resources (*kassa*) of all groups of activists'.⁵⁸

Here, in fact, we have in embryonic form the organizational structure of Zemlia i Volia – its representative 'council' (*bolshoi sovet*) and 'basic circle' (*osnovnoi kruzhek*) of administration, which centrally coordinated the activity of its various groups and special sections: the *otdeli* of 'disorganization', workers' propaganda, rural settlements (*derevenshchina*), and technical services (printing, communications, contraband operations, documentation and passports). Although the orientation of revolutionary practice had changed, the methods of organization remained essentially the same. 'Preparation' and *knizhnoe delo* gave way to direct socialist propaganda, political agitation, and armed resistance; the original Natansonist notion of a functionally organized and centrally coordinated 'union' of 'self-educational circles' gave rise to a relatively sophisticated 'party of struggle'.

Having definitely settled organizational and programmatic questions, the Zemlevoltsy applied themselves to their respective tasks as 'administrators', agents of 'self-defence', technicians of 'underground operations', rural agitators (*derevenshchiki*), and propagandists among workers and students, with Jews taking part in all these activities. Mark Natanson remained at the centre, busying himself with scrutinizing and recruiting new members and coordinating the affairs of the party in general. As the acknowledged leader and chief administrator of Zemlia i Volia, he acted as its representative and executive who maintained, expanded, and deepened relations with society, students, workers, and affiliated circles. In short, he was responsible for the party's internal workings and external public image – a responsibility which, says Aptekman in echoing

the general sentiment, 'Mark fulfilled excellently'.⁵⁹ Natanson's role in authoritatively representing Zemlia i Volia, its ideology and organization, is most succinctly revealed in connection with the infamous Chigirin affair, the only – almost successful – peasant insurrection carried out according to the precepts of *narodnichestvo*.

The Chigirin conspiracy originated among those southern *buntari* who had lost hope of revolutionizing the peasantry by simply initiating spontaneous uprisings (*bunt*). As a result of their negative experience in trying to ignite such rebellions, they arrived at a similar conclusion as their northern counterparts (though, of course, from a different, more radical vantage point): namely, that in order to mobilize 'the people' they would have to base their agitation on existing conflicts in the villages and the actual aspirations of the peasantry. Although determined to abandon their superficial practice of *buntarstvo* in favour of familiarizing themselves with the real needs and demands of the peasants, they nevertheless still thought in terms of an immediate large-scale popular insurrection. In this they planned to utilize not only the slogan of 'Land and Freedom' but also the name of the Tsar as a deceptive device to mislead the people in believing that the 'Liberator of 1861' sanctioned their action against rapacious officials and landowners. As it happened, these *narodnik-buntari* discovered an ideal field of operation among the Ukrainian peasants of Chigirin, a rural district in the vicinity of Kiev.

A large number of impoverished Chigirin peasants had been struggling for years to effect a repartition of the land 'according to souls' (*dushi*), that is, according to the 'heads' of a given household. The troubles began in earnest when district officials sided with the more prosperous sections of the population whose representatives were demanding that the parcels of land which they now owned should be confirmed by official legal deeds giving them full right of possession. Exploiting this conflict, which had already led to the killing of two partisans of redistribution (*dusheviki*) and the imprisonment of many others by troops stationed in the troublesome villages, three former members of the Kiev circle of *buntari* – Ivan Bokhanovskii, Lev Deich, and Iakov Stefanovich – devised a plan to exploit this volatile situation for revolutionary purposes. They got in touch with the *dusheviki* and, having gathered sufficient information, Stefanovich told them that he would petition the Tsar in person on their behalf.⁶⁰

Stefanovich never went to St Petersburg but returned to Kiev where, together with Bokhanovskii and Deich, he composed a forged imperial manifesto. This called on the peasants to organize themselves into a 'secret peasant society' and form fighting units to execute the 'will' of the Tsar who by his decree of 19 February 1861 had granted them land

and liberty against the will of the nobility. They printed the manifesto, a 'Secret Imperial Charter', on a makeshift press which another member of their group, the Jewess Anna Rozenshtein, had procured from abroad.⁶¹ In November 1876 everything was ready. Armed with the charter, Stefanovich presented himself to the discontented peasants as an 'Imperial commissioner' who had been secretly appointed by the Tsar to prepare them for a rebellion against the nobles and other high estates. After some hesitation the *dusheviki* believed the authenticity of the document and began to organize themselves under the guidance of Stefanovich and his lieutenants. By the time the conspiracy was discovered, in December 1877, some 2,000 peasants were ready to revolt in the 'name of the tsar'.

There is no need to elaborate in detail the obvious 'Jewish input' of Rozenshtein in printing the 'Imperial Charter', and especially of Deich in planning and executing this conspiracy. But one should emphasize – and this has so far been neglected in all accounts of the Chigirin affair – that the realization of this scheme was made possible in the last analysis only because Mark Natanson supported the Chigirintsy whole-heartily when they turned to him for assistance.

As an ideologue of *narodnichestvo* and politician of revolution Natanson was ready to sanction the dubious tactics of 'pretenderism' (*samo-zvanstvo*) because he clearly recognized the revolutionary potential of the conspiracy on the one hand and, on the other, the opportunity to tie its needy perpetrators organizationally to Zemlia i Volia. The only account, though a fairly complete one, of Natanson's role in the Chigirin affair has been provided by Lev Deich who together with Stefanovich actually negotiated the bargain of cooperation with 'the factual leader of the Northern Organization'.⁶²

As the story goes, they had come to St Petersburg in March (or perhaps late February) 1877 to forge closer links with Zemlia i Volia and to seek support for their financially starved operation. Knowing well that the latter (money) was dependent on the former (association) and that even so they could not be sure that the majority of Zemlevoltsy would endorse their morally questionable enterprise, it was, says Deich, 'extremely important for us, Chigirintsy, to have Natanson on our side'. Consequently, and unlike previous occasions when Natanson had tried to win their allegiance, they now proved amenable to his request to enter into a contractual relationship with Zemlia i Volia. It was agreed that while the Southerners would remain 'fully independent in their plans and ventures', they were obliged to communicate them to the council of Zemlia i Volia or at least to one of its members in as much detail as possible. Moreover, at the request of the council they would have 'to take

part in its undertakings when this was deemed necessary'. In return Zemlia i Volia promised to render personal and material support to their activities in the South.⁶³

Having thus ensured the good-will of Natanson, they proceeded to tell him the full details of their undertaking, while giving others merely a general account. They did not mention to the rank and file of Zemlia i Volia that they had created a secret organization by using the name of the Tsar since they suspected that in spite of the agreement the Zemlevoltsy might not support them if this unsavoury fact became known. Their trust in Natanson paid off. This is how Deich relates their crucial conversation with the *vozhak*: 'It was only to Natanson alone ... [that] we talked in detail about our venture without concealing the fact about the forged 'tsarist manifesto' which we had printed on our own press. He was not at all indignant or surprised about this. In short, he did not disagree at all with [us], the southern dare-devils ...'.⁶⁴ Assured of Natanson's approval, they now felt confident enough to spell out what they expected in terms of monetary support. He listened attentively to their request and, says Deich, 'limited himself only to the question of how much we needed immediately'. 'We explained', Deich continues, 'that right now two thousand rubles were necessary, and that later on, with the approach of the uprising, another twelve to fifteen thousand would be needed. Natanson agreed to this without any objection, and the next day ... handed to us the specified, at this time fairly significant, sum.'⁶⁵

Thus, as Deich readily admitted, had it not been for Natanson their formal agreement with Zemlia i Volia would probably have brought no immediate benefit to the Chigirintsy who, after all, had their own specific interests in mind when they finally gave up their much-valued autonomy. As for Natanson, the Chigirin conspiracy was apparently an extreme but legitimate exercise of *narodnichestvo* which, as far as he was concerned, created a potentially revolutionary situation while benefiting his party organizationally.

That Natanson paved the way for the Chigirin affair conjures up precisely the dangers inherent in his activism, which prompted him into all sorts of 'unholy alliances' for the sake of political gains – alliances which Ginzburg and his fellow Lavrovists had rejected from early days on when they refused to work together with the 'maniacs of rebellion and banditry' whom Natanson was trying to bring into the Union.⁶⁶ Yet, obviously, Natanson was not another Nechaev in spite of his readiness to employ questionable means to promote revolutionary ends. For the most part this unsavoury tendency of his activist personality was held in check by his democratic virtues and political wisdom which made him an enemy of unbridled Nechaevist practices. While he took the liberty to act

on what he considered to be in the best interest of his party, and while this indeed made him guilty of infamy by association, he was not a dictatorial leader implementing his own policy by devious means. This is not to say that there were no authoritarian elements in his charismatic leadership and organizational centralism, but these elements were balanced by his own insistence that the final authority in Zemlia i Volia rested with the council. The Chigirin decision was a pressing matter, however, and could not await ratification at a general meeting of all principal members of this council.

Considering the specific context in which Natanson was approached by the Southern Buntarists, it is not difficult to understand why he decided to support them. After all, ideologically and politically, the Chigirin conspiracy – however questionable its means – was in line with his own pragmatic thinking and radical disposition. In this he embodied, *par excellence*, the social-revolutionary *Zeitgeist* of his generation. For in essence the conspiracy was, as Franco Venturi has pointed out, 'the logical consequence of those "concessions to popular ideals" which had led to the criticism of the "policy of propaganda," at the time of the movement "to go to the people" and the formation of a more deliberate "Populist" wing'.⁶⁷ And, surely, if such an undertaking facilitated the popularity and viability of this 'wing', this was another compelling reason for a revolutionary politician like Natanson to promote its fortunes.

Mark Natanson's endorsement of the Chigirin venture proved to be his last important decision as leader of Zemlia i Volia. In June 1877 he was arrested in connection with his activity among St Petersburg workers. He was charged with belonging to the 'Society of Friends', a workers' circle which he had helped to form, and which he had utilized in staging his organization's first political demonstration on 6 December 1876.⁶⁸ Even though the demonstrators who had gathered in the square of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan were almost immediately dispersed by the police, the event was an enormous propaganda success in as much as it demonstrated to the radical community and the public at large the existence of a revolutionary party which dared to challenge the government publicly. It was the first time that its red banner of 'Land and Freedom' was unfurled before a crowd of several hundred people, composed mainly of students and workers. This was agitation *à la* Natanson at its best: the sort of 'propaganda by action' which the Lavrovists had condemned as Bakuninist political opportunism, but which the Natansonovtsy advocated as an effective method of publicly attacking the government's repressive policies, of educating the people

politically, of disseminating the message of social revolution in all strata of society, and of advertising themselves by 'deeds' in order to attract a following from among radically inclined workers and *intelligenty*.⁶⁹

Perhaps more than anything else, imbecility on the part of the authorities ensured that, in the words of one of Natanson's followers, this 'first practical application of our concept of *agitation*' succeeded on all accounts.⁷⁰ Unduly alarmed by the apparent collusion of workers and students at a political rally, the government ruthlessly prosecuted those arrested at the site of the crime. Displaying incredible savagery in their punishment, it turned a little noticed demonstration into a major public event and transformed a relatively harmless affair into a heroic manifestation of political opposition. Of the twenty-one demonstrators who were tried before a special court of the Senate for state crimes three received fifteen years of exile with hard labour, one ten years, and eleven others were sentenced to Siberian exile of indefinite duration.

As if to underscore the high rate of Jewish participation in this first protest of Land and Freedom there were five Jews among these 'Decembrists of 1876': A. N. Bibergal, F. I. Sheftel, Ia. E. Gurovich, S. L. Geller, and E. Z. Novakovskii. While the latter three had no previous record of radical activism and seem to have been fresh recruits to the incipient party of *Zemlia i Volia*, the first two had already participated in the *v narod* movement and were associated with the Natansonovtsy well before the Kazan Square demonstration, in the preparation of which they took part. They were promptly accused of 'inciting rebellion' and sentenced to exile in Siberia – Sheftel for an unspecified period of time (she was supposed to get ten years hard labour, but this was changed to exile because of her youth), Bibergal for fifteen years hard labour, thus making him the first Jew ever to be sentenced to *katorga* for a political offence.⁷¹ Considering that neither they nor any of the other offenders belonged to the leadership responsible for organizing the demonstration, their punishment was exceedingly harsh even by the standards of the day.

As for the leaders, they all managed to elude the police. Only months later, in connection with the 'Society of Friends' affair, was it discovered that Natanson was the 'chief initiator and organizer' of the Kazan Square demonstration and the *de facto* leader of the Russian revolutionary movement. This, together with his militant propaganda among the workers of St Petersburg, led to Natanson's arrest on 3 June 1877 and his sentencing to ten years of exile in the eastern Siberian province of Irkutsk.⁷²

Mark Natanson's legacy to the Russian revolutionary movement was a

strong and viable organization. Once again, as in the case of his first arrest and exile in 1871, he had accomplished his mission in time. Here is how Vera Figner assessed the situation after Natanson's involuntary departure from the revolutionary scene: 'In spite of its extraordinary importance, the arrest of Mark [Natanson] did not destroy the society of "Zemlia i Volia". The company of Mark was so well selected and so successfully merged ... that it was able to stand on its own feet and carry on the projected course [of action] without its head.'⁷³

In a nutshell, then, Natanson had been a political leader *sui generis*. He had created conditions which not only resulted in the formation of Zemlia i Volia, but also, most importantly, allowed this party to survive and flourish after his arrest. In this, as A. D. Mikhailov said, 'Mark Natanson was truly one of the apostles of the [Russian] socialist movement and the father of "Zemlia i Volia".'⁷⁴ Indeed, he may be said to have been the statesman of revolutionary Populism in the sense that he was able to give the movement an institutional stability, a political form, which remained operational even without his force of personality. This quality of Natanson, his originality in shaping *narodnichestvo*, and the inherent continuity of his 'creative ideological work',⁷⁵ was properly emphasized by Vera Figner:

The merits of Natanson as a revolutionary and founder of the circle of Chaikovtsy in 1871 and the secret society of 'Zemlia i Volia' in 1876 is incomparable with the activity of anyone else in this time. In [forming] the society of 'Zemlia i Volia' he selected with utmost skill and clarity of vision the original group [*sostav*] of members and, so to speak, infused them with his own spirit of action and conspiracy ... His work can only be compared with that small group of innovators, Morozov, Kviatkovskii, and Al[eksandr] Mikhailov, who in 1879 ... [originated] 'Narodnaia Volia' with its Executive Committee at the helm. But all of them ... were from the 'glorious school' of Natanson.⁷⁶

As we have witnessed in these pages, this is an accurate conclusion indeed. Short of Natanson's contribution, there might not have been a party of classical revolutionary Populism that was to influence all subsequent ideological and political movements of this genre of Russian radicalism.

In stressing the momentous importance of Mark Natanson as 'the father of Zemlia i Volia' it must not be forgotten, though, that from the point of Jewish participation in the movement he was merely the most outstanding representative of Jewish Populists during this phase. As we have shown, there were many Jews who played an important, if not crucial, role in the creation of Zemlia i Volia, both in its formative history and its actual establishment in 1876-77. One only need recall the names of Lev Ginzburg, Anna Epshtein, Aron Zundevich, and Osip

Aptekman. The latter two, together with Natanson and Aleksandr Khotinskii (who had been a very active *narodnik* in the south), entered into the Basic Circle by virtue of being 'founding members' of Zemlia i Volia.⁷⁷ While this was not a large number of Jews in the inner council of a party numbering some twenty-five people (though still making up an impressive 16 per cent of its membership), it was the quality of their work which in a conspiratorial organization such as Zemlia i Volia made the difference between dissolution and survival.

A fitting example is Zundelevich, who put into place the last building-block for completing the organization as designed by its architect Mark Natanson – the publication of its own party organ *Zemlia i Volia* on Russian soil. At first, such a project was not considered feasible. Experience had shown that except for the short-lived Utin press of 1862–63 all attempts to establish even the most rudimentary printing press invariably ended in failure. As Sergei Kravchinskii wrote, 'it was only an idle dream, a waste of money, and a useless and senseless sacrifice of men. "Serious" people had shelved the idea of a secret press altogether, they no longer wanted to hear or speak about it.' However, he continued rather prosaically, 'there was a dreamer, a man of imagination, who would not accept the universally held opinion and, instead, vehemently argued that a secret press could be established in St Petersburg itself, and that he would build it if supplied with the necessary means'.⁷⁸ The 'dreamer' in question was Aron Zundelevich.

In the end Zundelevich secured not only one, but two printing presses: one for his own party and another for a group of socialists intent on publishing a non-partisan journal by the name of *Nachalo*. Both machines were purchased in Berlin in 1877, taken apart for contraband transport, and reassembled in St Petersburg.⁷⁹ Summing up this accomplishment, Aleksandr Mikhailov, a principal leader of Zemlia i Volia after Natanson's arrest, told his comrades in February 1882:

a biography of Zundelevich is in order. Aside from the fact that he was an outstanding activist, he rendered invaluable services to free speech in Russia ... Zundelevich bought and brought to Russia two printing presses: 'The Russian Free Press' and the printing press of *Nachalo*, which then [in August 1878] were [merged and] renamed 'Zemlia i Volia' or 'St Petersburg Free Press' ... He set up and operationalized both of them in St Petersburg, helping as well in the work of the first press. Displaying the crafty artfulness of his Jewish surrounding, he was incredibly energetic and lively – in short, he was truly astonishing.⁸⁰

This praise of Zundelevich, voiced by all his comrades without exception, was well deserved. What he had really done was to invest Zemlia i Volia with 'the necessary weapon for directly reaching Russian society: a printing press capable of existing for some time in Russia itself at the

vexation of the police, a press that responded quickly with the printed word to all current questions and events'.⁸¹

Indeed the establishment of the 'St Petersburg Free Press', which rested on the two machines supplied and put in place by Zundelevich, gave Natanson's organization its proper name once it started to print the first issues of *Zemlia i Volia* in 1878. So well conceived and arranged was Zundelevich's underground operation that for the next three years it kept working regularly, turning out *Zemlia i Volia* publications until 1879 and then the literature of *Narodnaia Volia* in 1880 and 1881. The historical significance of this enterprise has best been captured by Peter Lavrov, who, in paying tribute to both Natanson and Zundelevich, stated that 'the new phase of the movement rested on [a] correctly structured organizational foundation which made it possible, finally, to have a *central organ* for the Russian cause, thus turning the former partisans of Bakuninism ... into a *revolutionary army* ... [that] was to play a prominent role in Russian society'.⁸²

7 The heresy of political terrorism

On 7 December 1877 Valerian Smirnov wrote to his wife, Rosaliia Idelson, that he had received information from Russia to the effect that 'the "rebels" (Arkadii is now their general) are ... beginning to explain that one must first fight for a political programme'. The 'rebels' were of course the Zemlevoltsy, and their 'general' was none other than Aron Zundelevich. Ever since the formation of Zemlia i Volia the Lavrovists had watched with apprehension its growing political radicalization. Horrified by this development, Peter Lavrov told German Lopatin as early as March 1877: '... everyone's spirit has sunk a lot, and many think that the road to social revolution lies only through a constitution, and that they [the Zemlevoltsy] must help the constitutionalists. Horror!'¹ Zundelevich, who stood behind this 'horror', drew his own conclusions. On 30 December 1877 he notified a leading Lavrovist: 'I still regard you and your friends as my comrades in general, but not in a narrow sense of the term ... You refuse to understand that Russia is a country where nothing else can be done but putsches.'²

For accuracy's sake it should be noted that Zundelevich was only one of the 'generals' in Zemlia i Volia, and that, except for him, there were as yet no Zemlevoltsy who in 1877 explicitly advocated 'constitution'. The other 'generals' at the time were Olga Shleisner-Natanson and Aleksei Oboleshev who actually administered Zemlia i Volia with the help of such outstanding activists as Aleksandr Mikhailov. Leading the party in the spirit of Natanson, they were not insensitive to its political nature. Already in the spring of 1878 they recognized the need to introduce political demands into their organization's programme. But while they were still only groping hesitantly towards this recognition, Zundelevich openly declared that a terrorist campaign for political freedom ought to be the primary task of Zemlia i Volia. In this respect he was indeed the leading exponent, the 'general' of the growing political tendency in revolutionary Populism.

Unlike anyone else, Zundelevich explicitly propagated the idea of political terrorism in order to bring about a constitutional regime as a

precondition for the evolution of socialism in Russia. His outstanding role in originating and promoting this strategy was readily acknowledged by his contemporaries. In a letter 'To Comrades', dated 16 February 1882, Aleksandr Mikhailov wrote:

[Zundelevich] was also original in his political views. In this respect he was not at all a Russian [Populist], rather he was a German Social Democrat ... For him the goal of any political activity was always freedom of speech and general political freedom. If, with his characteristic passion and energy, he joined the Russian revolutionary movement and later on [its] terrorist tendency, this was singularly in the name of political liberty. He generally was a Westerner [*zapadnik*], and all his sympathies were there.³

Zundelevich's originality was greeted with 'horror' not only by the Lavrovists, but also by many of his comrades in Zemlia i Volia and the movement at large. Some of them were shocked by the fact that this 'most prominent member of a "narodnik" society spoke out in a very definite manner against any kind of revolutionary activity among the peasants which he found completely useless' – and that, instead, he extolled the virtues of the 'bourgeois order of things' and demonstrated the 'necessity of its realization in Russia'. Adding insult to injury, here was a leader of an ostensibly 'anarchist organization' who desecrated its sacred Bakuninist ideals by declaring himself a follower of German Social Democracy. Terrible indeed! It was simply incomprehensible to his comrades that their 'most beloved and sympathetic "Moisha"' allowed himself to elevate exultingly the "German sausage-eater" above the Russian peasants, the innate socialist-revolutionaries!⁴

It bespeaks the prestige and respect Zundelevich enjoyed among his fellow revolutionaries that he 'got away' with his threefold heresy of anti-peasantism, pro-Germanism, and bourgeois constitutionalism, and that, moreover, he was listened to regardless of how painful his arguments must have been to Populist tuned ears. While it is difficult to gauge the actual influence of Zundelevich's views, there can be no doubt that his unprecedented courage in voicing them loudly, and contradicting Populist taboos openly, contributed significantly to the growing acceptance within Zemlia i Volia of politics at the expense of a purely social-revolutionary orientation.

For the Lavrovists the Zundelevich heresy was no more than an extreme manifestation of the inherently political nature of Zemlia i Volia. As Valerian Smirnov had indicated already in December 1875, they feared that the 'buntarist tactics' and 'organizational imperative' of its founder, Mark Natanson, would merely strengthen the constitutional movement in Russia and, in the final analysis, would lead to nothing else

but 'putsches'. Although unduly harsh in their condemnation of Natansonist agitation and organization, the Lavrovists were essentially right in their assessment of the political character and implications of Natanson's theory and practice of *narodnichestvo*. For, if Zundeleovich can be viewed as the most conscious exponent of this political tendency, Natanson can be said to have created the preconditions, the institutional framework, for the assertion of politics in revolutionary Populism by founding a party whose principal features – organizational centralism, agitational pragmatism, 'disorganizational' terrorism – eventually gave rise to the political, quasi-constitutional party called Narodnaia Volia.

It would be misleading, though, to assume that Natanson's creation of 'party-political' structures and Zundeleovich's demand for 'political struggle' were sufficient cause in the politicization of Zemlia i Volia. The relatively quick strengthening of this tendency was greatly facilitated by the ever growing militancy among the rank-and-file revolutionaries in the face of increasing government persecution. The vicious circle of government repression and revolutionary revenge was bound to escalate into a campaign of systematic terrorism that was eventually legitimized politically rather than ideologically. Thus, circumstances beyond the control or influence of Zundeleovich and Natanson ensured the development of an explicitly terrorist party with an overtly political programme of action.

The rise of political terrorism was accompanied, however, by internal conflicts. For while it is true that Zemlia i Volia was by implication a political party, this was not obvious to the majority of its members, who considered themselves exclusively social-revolutionary by conviction in spite of the fact that their tactics of *buntarstvo* were political in nature. Although the majority of Zemlevoltsy finally realized that politics had to play a crucial role in their revolutionary struggle, there remained quite a few who found themselves incapable of contradicting their ostensibly apolitical, orthodox Populist principles. Unable to reach a compromise, the two factions decided to go their own ways in the fall of 1879. Hence, the 'terrorists' and the 'anti-terrorists' formed their own parties of Narodnaia Volia and Chernyi Peredel respectively.

Jews were to be found in both factions and played a substantial role in the formation and activity of both organizations. Indeed, not only Zundeleovich and Natanson but Jewish activists in general contributed significantly to the evolution of Narodnaia Volia and Chernyi Peredel. Directly and indirectly, they participated in almost all terrorist acts, so helping to push Zemlia i Volia towards political-constitutional goals. Others who, like some of their Russian comrades, had serious misgivings about the wisdom of political terrorism, were in the forefront of

organizing the Chernyi Peredel alternative. What follows is an account of their participation and its significance for the politicization of revolutionary Populism between 1877 and 1879.

The first time Zemlia i Volia's 'disorganization group' went into action was in June 1877. Two of its members, A. Presniakov and N. Tiutchev, killed the railroad worker N. F. Sharashkin for betraying Mark Natanson and a large number of workers associated with his so-called 'Society of Friends'. Himself a participant in the meetings of this Zemlia i Volia workers' circle, Sharashkin had told the police all he knew about its programme, membership and leading personalities. Particularly damaging to Natanson was Sharashkin's revelation that he, Natanson, had been the principal organizer of the Kazan Square demonstration, and that among the radical *intelligenty* he was the most militant advocate of 'revolts' (*bunty*) against the government, propagating 'activities of political character'. In short, from Sharashkin's testimony Natanson emerged as chief activist, principal organizer, financial manager, and guardian angel of the 'Society of Friends'.⁵ Predictably, Natanson was sentenced to unlimited Siberian exile. In turn, perhaps equally predictably, Sharashkin became the first victim of Natanson's politically most volatile innovation – terrorism, or as the Zemlevoltsy called it, 'disorganization'.

Evidently, it was only a question of time before such violent tactics would lead to an open confrontation with the tsarist government. That this time was significantly shortened was due, however, to the adoption of similar tactics by the much more extreme Buntarists of Southern Russia.

A particularly gruesome assassination attempt on a suspected *agent-provocateur*, Nikolai E. Gorinovich, had taken place in Odessa almost a year prior to Sharashkin's murder in St Petersburg. In the words of an official report, the perpetrators of this 'completely premeditated crime deceptively lured Gorinovich to Odessa where [they], in the night of June 11, 1876, inflicted heavy wounds on his head, and [then] his very face was covered with sulfuric acid by [Lev] Deich. Nonetheless the victim stayed alive.' The report passes over one important detail, namely, that the would-be assassins had attached to the victim's body a note which read: 'Such will be the fate of all spies.' Except for this detail, the official version of the attempted killing has been confirmed by Lev Deich, who added that it was inexperience which prevented him and his comrades from executing their task properly – thus allowing the terribly mutilated Gorinovich to survive his ordeal only to tell the police all he knew about his tormentors and any other associate of theirs.⁶

Of the seven people who were eventually convicted on Gorinovich's testimony three were Jews: Leiba Osipovich Maidanskii, Semen Mikhailovich Kraev, and of course Lev Grigorevich Deich. The first, together with two other accomplices, was hanged in Odessa on 7 December 1879; the second was sentenced to fifteen years of hard labour which, however, was reduced to six months in prison due to his willing cooperation with the investigating authorities; the third eluded the police until 1884 when the German authorities extradited him to Russia, where he was promptly exiled to thirteen years hard labour in eastern Siberia.⁷

The execution of Maidanskii in 1879 contributed directly to Narodnaia Volia's determination to intensify its terrorist campaign against the tsarist state. More profound, however, was the fact that as a consequence of the Gorinovich affair assassinations were increasingly viewed as an acceptable, even legitimate, weapon of revolutionary revenge and defence. The Southern 'rebels' may not have been able to ignite a peasant *buntarstvo*, but they certainly helped to bring about 'the atmosphere of terrorism' which at the end of the seventies contributed to the rise of Narodnaia Volia.⁸

That 'the virus of terror spread first in the south [of Russia]' has long been recognized by historians.⁹ But a serious analysis of this 'remarkable phenomenon' has been offered only more recently by Andreas Kappeler in his statistical analysis of Russian terrorists between 1878 and 1887. His findings indicate that one of the principal reasons for the southern origins of terrorism was 'the national composition of the population in the south-western region'. His data shows that among the terrorists of the south-west 'the Russians were clearly a minority with 31 % compared to 38 % and 20 % for Ukrainians and Jews respectively'. Clearly, as suggested by Kappeler, nationality emerges as an explanatory factor in the genesis of southern terrorism.¹⁰ Whatever other, interrelated socio-economic motifs entered in making the south-western provinces of Russia ripe for political extremism, the point to be made here is that Jews constituted an important, if not crucial, national element in turning the region into a hotbed of terrorist violence.

The statistical findings of Kappeler (as they relate to Jews) show up in the presence of Jewish radicals in almost all 'southern circles' which were directly or indirectly involved in acts of terrorism or physical resistance against the authorities. For instance, the Elizavetgrad circle of Lev I. Rozenfeld, which was closely linked with the Kiev Buntarists and helped them in organizing the Gorinovich assassination, consisted almost exclusively of Jews. The same was the case in Nikolaev where the 'rebels' were in contact with Solomon Vittenberg, Aron Gobet, Lev and

Savelii Zlatopolskii, all of whom were leading activists among the local, predominantly Jewish, radical youth.¹¹ Indeed, Jews were a major and very active component in virtually all radical circles which in the south of Russia acted as catalysts of political terrorism.

On 24 July 1878 a momentous event took place in Odessa which in the annals of Russian revolutionary history is called the 'first armed demonstration'. On that day several thousand people took to the streets to protest against the death sentence on I. M. Kovalskii for his and his comrades' armed resistance against the police several months earlier. The hard core of demonstrators, some of whom were armed, consisted of radicals from Nikolaev, Kiev, Kremenchug, and Odessa itself. Many of them were Jews whose presence was particularly pronounced as instigators and vocal participants in the demonstration.

Solomon Efremovich Lion (1857–19?), leader of the Odessa circle of Lavrovists, and Solomon Iakovlevich Vittenberg (1852–79), leader of the Nikolaev circle, were among the principal organizers of the demonstration. In the forefront of the demonstrators were six Jewesses – Viktoriia Gukovskaia, Fanny Moreinis, Khristina Grinberg, Sofia Orzhikh, and the sisters Anastasiia and Sofia Shekhter. Except for Gukovskaia, all of them were either members of Lion's circle or had been associated with the defunct Kovalskii circle.¹²

These Jewish radicals had been deeply impressed by the deed of Kovalskii and his friends. For by defending themselves against a police raid on their 'headquarters' on 30 January 1878, they had chosen to practise what they had preached: namely, to launch an armed struggle with the authorities in the name of political freedom and social revolution.

That this specific act of resistance had been inspired by Vera Zasulich's famous shooting of the St Petersburg Governor, General F. F. Trepov, just six days earlier was obvious to all and made them appreciate even more the political message of their 'martyr' – Ivan Kovalskii. Henceforth they all embraced the terrorist alternative of revolutionary Populism. Even Solomon Lion completely abandoned his Lavrovist stance of 'peaceful propaganda'. While already in prison for his part in the Kovalskii demonstration, he admonished his erstwhile Lavrovist friends to remain dedicated to the revolutionary cause which now demanded 'terror and tsaricide'. Among his Jewish compatriots Vittenberg least needed this encouragement. He had already made his debut as a terrorist during the Kovalskii protest, when he fired at advancing soldiers and thus turned this event into an armed demonstration.¹³

Who was Solomon Vittenberg? According to his friend and comrade-in-arms, Mikhail Abramovich Moreinis, Solomon was born into a poor orthodox family. His father, an artisan, tried to eke out a living by

repairing and selling mirrors. His mother was a very intelligent and deeply religious woman, who 'greatly loved and knew fairly well' Yiddish literature. Young Solomon was an extremely bright, if not precocious, child. Already at an early age 'he was acquainted with the five books of Moses, read the prophets and translated them into Yiddish'. Justly admiring the 'young scholar', everyone expected him to become an 'outstanding talmudist'.¹⁴ Evidently, this was not to be the destiny of Solomon Vittenberg.

Although deeply embedded in the Jewish orthodox fold, the Vittenberg family was not immune to the enlightened secular spirit of Alexandrine Russia which penetrated even the most traditional segments of Russian Jewry. At the age of ten, Solomon studied Russian and, then, with the support of his twenty-year-old sister, implored his parents to give him a 'secular education'. After much domestic turmoil the obstinate boy finally convinced his parents – and shattered their dream.

Solomon entered the local gymnasium at Nikolaev in 1862. He proved to be a brilliant student who greatly impressed his teachers by his character and intelligence. Already in grade three they recommended him as tutor to less gifted pupils. Being first in his class academically, he could expect a 'gold medal' on matriculation – a passport with sufficient pocket money, as it were, to attend university. But fate decided otherwise. For a very minor disciplinary infraction Vittenberg was 'sentenced' by the gymnasium's 'pedagogic council' to two hours *kartser* (solidary confinement). Considering himself innocent, the strong-willed Vittenberg refused to submit to this degrading punishment, picked up his school records, and left gymnasium for good in his tenth and final class. The significance of this incident lies not only in that he forfeited the chance of a university education, but that it shows Vittenberg as a determined and principled person who righteously refused to compromise when he felt wronged even if this meant sacrifices which were far more severe than warranted.

Barred from entering a Russian university, but set on studying a 'socially useful science' as prescribed by Pisarev whom he had read at gymnasium, Vittenberg went abroad in 1872 and enrolled in the Vienna Technological Institute. He studied until 1875/76 when homesickness, financial difficulties, and perhaps marital problems (he had married the daughter of his Jewish landlord in Vienna) compelled him to return to his native Nikolaev. Although he had intended to stay only temporarily, he remained in Nikolaev and nearby Odessa until tsarist gallows cut short his life in 1879.

During his absence, Nikolaev had witnessed the formation of numerous radical youth circles which in 1875–76 coalesced around the

'commune' of the brothers Zlatopolskii, Lev and Savelii. Following the example of many of his former school friends who had joined these circles in the spirit of Lavrov's social revolutionary prescriptions, Vittenberg joined up as well. In time he became a very active propagandist among students, workers, and sailors of the Nikolaev–Odessa region. This first phase of his revolutionary activity came to an end when at the beginning of 1877 he was arrested and imprisoned for six weeks for no specific reason other than his relatively harmless Lavrovist-inspired 'preparatory propaganda'.¹⁵

Vittenberg's imprisonment coincided with that rising wave of terrorism which had sprung up in the south of Russia since the Gorinovich assassination. Both combined to turn Vittenberg into a convinced terrorist. Besides the fact that it was in prison that he met his future terrorist accomplice, the sailor I. I. Logovenko, whose uncomplicated extremism may have impressed Vittenberg, the whole experience of incarceration predisposed Vittenberg to accept the terrorist argument that direct political action was the only effective response to tsarist persecution and the only means of destroying the autocratic state. Already intimately acquainted with Kovalskii and his ideas prior to his arrest, these arguments now acquired a renewed and much more pressing validity in Vittenberg's revolutionary world-view.

Perhaps equally important for his decision to join the terrorist movement were the exploits of the Kiev Buntarists. At the end of 1877, they had found an eloquent spokesman for their militant radicalism in the person of Valerian Osinskii – an early Zemlevolets whose reckless revolutionary style did not, however, fit the cautious and disciplined mould of Natanson's *Zemlia i Volia*. Going south, Osinskii congregated with the *buntari* who, like Kovalskii, had already begun to think of terror as a political means to challenge the government. A born terrorist if there ever was one, Osinskii quickly adopted their line of thinking and elaborated it by equating terrorism with the conquest of constitutional liberties. Practising their 'revolutionary constitutionalism' in the name of a mysterious and largely fictitious 'Executive Committee', Osinskii and his group embarked on a string of terrorist attacks which, on the one hand, caused panic in government circles and, on the other, encouraged people like Vittenberg to commit themselves to political terrorism.¹⁶

In the spring of 1878 Vittenberg and his Jewish comrades in Nikolaev began the 'new style' of struggle by producing explosives from pyroxylin. It appears, though, that it was not until after the pronouncement of Kovalskii's death sentence and the concurrent demonstration that Vittenberg thought of directing terrorism at the symbol of tsarist power – Alexander II. In any case, it was only on his return from Odessa, where

he was sought by the police in connection with his role in the demonstration, that he told his friends of his intention to blow up the Tsar, who was expected to pass through Nikolaev on his way to St Petersburg at the end of August 1878. He had no difficulty in gaining their cooperation. As Mikhail Moreinis, a member of the Vittenberg circle, wrote: '[we] related very sympathetically' to the idea of regicide since it 'coincided fully with our mood [at the time]'. 'We', he continued, 'agreed to take a very active part in the work and proceeded with the execution of the plan in question.'¹⁷

Except for Vittenberg's 'right hand', the Ukrainian sailor Logovenko, all those who applied themselves 'with great enthusiasm to the task' were Jewish youths of the Nikolaev radical community. There were three of them besides Moreinis: Aleksandr Grigorevich Lurii, Aron Lvovich Rashkov, and Aleksandr Nikolaevich Zaidner.¹⁸ Acting primarily as a 'support staff', they set up and maintained the 'workshop' where Vittenberg and Logovenko worked ceaselessly to construct the mine which they intended to plant beneath the road along which Alexander II was expected to travel on his way through Nikolaev. The whole operation was directed by Vittenberg who, according to Moreinis, 'took upon himself the organizational work and also its technical aspects'. In this he was assisted by Logovenko who, with the help of his sailor comrades, procured from the naval stores of the Russian Black Sea fleet all the necessary equipment for making the mine.¹⁹

Everything progressed rather well. Due to an excellent division of labour and stringent precautionary measures Vittenberg and Logovenko managed to accumulate a sizable stockpile of explosive material, which, as it was produced, was picked up by Moreinis who stored it in the cellar of his parents' home. Yet, in spite of careful planning, the project never passed beyond this initial stage of preparation.

Solomon Vittenberg was arrested on 16 August 1878. By chance the police had discovered his address on a person who had been sent from Odessa to assist in the assassination attempt. The ensuing house search revealed illegal literature, pamphlets of Osinskii's 'Executive Committee', arms and, most incriminating, the machinery to produce explosives. All others who had taken part in the conspiracy were arrested within weeks. Tried at the 'Trial of the 28', they were sentenced to exile with forced labour in eastern Siberia. Vittenberg, however, received capital punishment. Calmly facing death, he was hanged on 10 August 1879 in his native Nikolaev.²⁰

As a 'eulogy' to Vittenberg's courageous *Dasein zum Tode* it is fitting to reflect on the religious-existential motif of his destiny. Solomon Vittenberg died serenely in the belief that he sacrificed his life for a holy

cause – socialism. Strong-willed and uncompromising in his determination to achieve this sacred ideal, he dedicated his life to the most extreme and fanatical manifestation of revolutionary Populism – terrorism. The former was his religion; the latter his calling.

How much the fundamental religiosity of the man had entered inextricably into his new socialist faith was vividly revealed in a letter which he wrote to his comrades on the day before his execution:

Dear friends! Naturally, I do not want to die. To say that I am dying willingly would be a lie. But let this latest circumstance not cast any shadow on my faith or on the certainty of my convictions. Remember that the highest example of benevolence and self-sacrifice was, undoubtedly, the Saviour. Yet, even he prayed: 'Take this cup away from me'. Consequently, how can I not pray likewise? No less, I, like him, tell myself: 'If no other way is possible, if for the triumph of socialism it is necessary to shed my blood, if the transition from the present to a better future order is impossible by any other way than by trampling over our bodies, then let our blood be shed, let it redeem humanity, [let] it fertilize the soil in which the seed of socialism will sprout – so that socialism may triumph and triumph soon. This is my faith. Here again I recall the words of the Saviour: 'Truly, I say unto you, not many of those present here relish death as the coming of the heavenly kingdom' – of this I am convinced in as much as I am convinced that the earth moves. And when I climb the scaffold and the rope tightens around my neck, then my last thought will be: 'nevertheless it moves, and nothing in the world can stop its movement'.²¹

Here the secular certitude of a Galileo and the messianic redemption of Christ fused into a chiliastic socialist *Weltanschauung* that gave Vittenberg the strength to die for his convictions and to forgive his adversaries. As he wrote in a postscript to his girlfriend and future Narodovolka Fanni A. Moreinis: 'If you attach any significance to my last will, if you hold my last wish sacred, then give up the idea of revenge: "Forgive them, for they know not what they do." Even this is a sign of the times: their mind has been obscured; they see that another epoch will soon begin, and they do not know how to prevent it.'²²

More than in the case of any other Jewish revolutionary, Vittenberg and his 'testament' show the degree to which Populist Jews were motivated by strong religious impulses. The Christian nature of Vittenberg's letter must not divert our attention from the fact that it was the Jewish religiosity of his upbringing which caused him, as was the case with others like Aptekman and Tsukerman, to equate socialism with his deep-seated religious feelings. Scholars have justly cautioned against perceiving Judaism as a motivating force of Jewish radicalization. But to ignore or deny the workings of this religious dimension in the psychology of revolutionary Jews would be short-sighted. It prevents us

from comprehending the mental processes which drove alienated men and existentially troubled individuals like Vittenberg to sanctify socialism and to commit themselves to terrorism. For Vittenberg, Jesus Christ was one of the prophets – a Judaic as much as a Christian Messiah. For him they merged in a vision of a personal mission to redeem humanity – in the utopia of salvation through socialism.²³

The explicitly religious character of Vittenberg, the unusual wholeness and strength of his personality, are unique. Yet persons of similar fanatical, albeit less religious, bearing and moral integrity were not uncommon in the ranks of Jewish terrorists (nor, it should be added, were they absent among the Gentiles, whose own ‘saint’ Dmitrii Lizogub financed terrorist activities). Besides the obvious example of Zundeleovich, there is also the little-known case of a revolutionary Jew who was the first terrorist worker and the first Jewish terrorist to fall victim to tsarist gallows.

Hardly a month before Vittenberg’s execution a similar fate had befallen a long-time associate of his, Izrail-Aron Gobet (1845–79).²⁴ Although unknown to the authorities, their almost simultaneous hanging was more than just a coincidence. There was a common background to their activity and execution. They had met for the first time in Nikolaev in 1876. But while Vittenberg had only just begun to frequent local revolutionary circles, Gobet was already an experienced activist. After having participated in the South Russian Workers’ Union of E. Zaslavskii in Odessa, from 1872 to 1875, he settled in Nikolaev in the guise of a shoemaker. His workshop served both as a centre of conspiracy and as a place where local radical youths received their ‘vocational training’ for ‘going to the people’. Moreover, unlike Vittenberg and others who were typical Lavrovist *intelligenty*, Gobet was a real worker who had little inclination or patience to discuss the niceties of social-revolutionary theory. Tired of their long discussions, he used to tell them: ‘In my opinion, they [the rich and powerful] must all be beaten, hanged, shot, and pulverized with dynamite – only then will there be a revolution.’²⁵

These were the blunt words of a person who had experienced all the deprivation and degradation which can occur to people of his social station and ethnic background. A skilled shoemaker at the age of fourteen, but the son of an impoverished artisan, he was conveniently ‘ear-marked’ by the Vilna Jewish community for military service. Drafted in 1859, he served in the Russian army until 1872 when he was discharged holding the rank of non-commissioned officer. Ironically, had it not been for his military service Gobet might never have become a revolutionary. Most probably he would have remained a Jewish artisan securely encased in his class and culture. What gymnasium did for

numerous Jewish youngsters, the army did for Gobet. It effectively alienated him from his Jewish environment and gave him a rudimentary Russian education in which he was able to articulate his pent-up resentment against the oppressive authority of the Jewish *kahal* and the Russian *nachal'stvo*.

Sufficiently acculturated in language and manner to pass as a Russian, he was well equipped to propagate his socialist extremism in the milieu of Russian-Ukrainian workers and soldiers. It was not until 1879, however, that Gobet acted on the terrorist pronouncements he had voiced so freely among his Nikolaev friends already in 1875–76.

In September 1876 Gobet liquidated his shop in Nikolaev. He went to Odessa where he worked on the railroads, and where in all probability he also conducted propaganda among his coworkers. In preparation for Russia's war against Turkey, Gobet was called up at the end of the year to serve with the 60th infantry regiment stationed in Odessa. Here he continued his socialist agitation. Soldiers arrested for participating in, or knowing of, Gobet's subversive activity testified that he propagated revolution from the very beginning of the regiment's mobilization. He was said to have 'incited the soldiers to rebel' by telling them 'that the whole Tsarist family and all officials [*nachal'niki*] must be destroyed, then all the wealth must be distributed between themselves... then all will be good, everyone will be equal, and there would be nobody to take taxes from them'. The military authorities were greatly alarmed on discovering the extent to which the 'lower ranks' had been infected by Gobet's propaganda 'to overthrow the government and to change the order of social organization in general'.²⁶ While all others involved in the affair were apprehended, Gobet deserted in time and most certainly escaped court-martial. Although a very able police agent was assigned to seek him out, Gobet, with the help of Lion and his Lavrovist friends, managed to cover up his tracks so well that he was neither found then, nor identified later.²⁷ In 1879 he was executed under the pseudonym Anisim Fedorov.

Making his way to St Petersburg, Gobet associated with Zemlia i Volia. He founded a circle consisting of workers of the large New Textile Factory. In its vicinity he once again set up a shoemaker's shop which served as the group's meeting place. Shortly thereafter, in March 1878, the factory workers went on strike against the threat of reduced pay and disadvantageous new regulations. This was the first labour strike in Russian history which was connected with a revolutionary organization, and which developed directly under its influence. The linchpin in this connection was none other than Gobet, who, as 'the soul of the workers' circle', may also have had a significant role in initiating the strike.²⁸

According to Georgii Plekhanov, the future 'father of Russian Marxism', but at that time Zemlia i Volia's expert on labour affairs, it was Gobet who made possible the collusion between the Zemlevoltsy and the workers. In Plekhanov's opinion, Gobet 'alone was worth a whole circle' in that he was 'not only a reliable person, but also positively unusual in his devotion to the [revolutionary] cause'. Throughout the strike his shop functioned as the headquarters of the strikers and their allies. Here workers received guidance from Gobet and the Zemlevoltsy, who also supported them financially with money collected from students and 'liberal society'.²⁹ Unfortunately for Gobet's subsequent fate, the time was not yet ripe for successful strikes or a labour movement sufficiently strong to sustain itself and its leaders. The strike was suppressed by the police, and Gobet was forced to change his 'underground residence' once more – this time to Kiev.

Kiev was an obvious place to go. Here were the followers of Valerian Osinskii who for some time had been doing precisely the sort of things Gobet had advocated himself all along – killing spies, provocateurs, and police officials. But Gobet did not last long in this environment. Like most associates of the 'Executive Committee' before him, he was caught by the police and promptly hanged on 18 July 1879 for conspiring to kill the Tsar with explosives found in his possession.

Unknown to the investigating authorities was the fact that the actual source of this incriminating evidence had been the Nikolaev 'workshop' of Vittenberg's terrorist organization. Due to the efforts of Mikhail Moreinis the explosive material had been transferred to Odessa to prevent its seizure in the aftermath of Vittenberg's arrest in August 1878. From there it ended up in Kiev where Gobet and others belonging to the 'Executive Committee' intended to repeat Vittenberg's unlucky first attempt to blow up Alexander II. Little is known about Gobet's role in this second attempt except that he was in charge of the 'killing machinery'.³⁰ As in the case of Vittenberg, the enterprise failed because of an incidental chain of events which led to the discovery of the explosives in the home of Izrail-Aron Gobet alias Anisim Fedorov. This, then, was the finale of the Nikolaev episode which had begun in 1876 and ended with the hanging of Vittenberg and Gobet in 1879.

Aron Gobet, and, even more so, Solomon Vittenberg fit the first of two psychological types of Jewish terrorists juxtaposed by E. Tscherikower: the personality capable of bearing the stress of political violence as opposed to the one unable to sustain the mental and physical ordeal of terrorism. While, as Tscherikower himself recognized, these two types were also in evidence among non-Jews, he was probably right in stating that 'in the case of Jewish activists however, these types were more

pronounced and more sharply distinct: the evolution from the apolitical Jewish Pale [of Settlement] to terrorism, to the assassination of the Tsar, was incomparably more complicated for a Jewish youth than for a Russian'.³¹ Hence, only strong characters of the first type were able to survive mentally in the rapid and dramatic process that thrust them into the forefront of political terrorism. The 'psychological casualties' of this process were Jewish terrorists of the second type, the latter personified by Grigorii Davidovich Goldenberg (1855–80).³²

Disoriented and frustrated by a Jewish world in transition, Goldenberg was pathetically unsuccessful in his search for a new focus of identification. Attracted to terrorism by his pathological striving for recognition, he lacked the moral fibre of men like Gobet and Vittenberg. Ultimately, suicide was the nemesis of this irreparably estranged individual.

The revolutionary career and tragic suicide of Goldenberg is also an ideal-typical example of the Jewish motif in the life of Populist Jews. His parents, like so many other Jewish families in the liberal years of Alexander II's reign, availed themselves of the opportunity to leave the backwaters of the Jewish Pale in order to improve their livelihood in a larger city of the empire. From Berdichev they went in 1865 to Kiev where Grigorii's father opened up a flourishing hardware store. But in the life of the Goldenbergs the move signified more than just geographical and economic change. It also implied a change of life-style and culture. In Berdichev they had been an observant merchant family of the second guild. Although the ideas of the Haskalah had seeped into this stronghold of Jewish orthodoxy, the Goldenbergs had remained strictly traditional in their habits and religious disposition. Yet this lasted only as long as they were securely anchored in the Jewish culture of their native Berdichev. After their move to Kiev all this changed radically. Here, in the words of one historian:

Currents of modern life poured into the Kiev home of the Goldenbergs. And together with these currents there penetrated the progressive ideas of the epoch ... Even the parents succumbed to the influence of this new atmosphere. This was shown in the first place by their willingness to give their children a secular education. And not only did the young Grigorii welcome animatedly and gladly the new ideas proclaiming a new life and calling for active work in the interest of the people, but also his brother and sisters fervently responded to the challenge posed by contemporary life and events.³³

In the end, all the children of the Goldenberg family were caught up in the revolutionary movement, swept into it by the radicalizing currents of the time and circumstances.³⁴ Grigorii, the eldest and most talented, was the first to fall victim to the siren call of revolution.

Already in 1873–74 we find him among the youthful radicals of Kiev who were preparing themselves ‘to go to the people’. Apparently, he did not distinguish himself at that time. According to Deich, who knew him then, ‘he was neither an agitator nor a propagandist, he lacked natural ability and acquired maturity’. His insignificant role bothered him terribly. In spite of his limitations he was very ambitious. He strongly desired to project himself to become ‘famous’. Although Deich’s characterization is probably tinted by what he knew about Goldenberg’s subsequent fate, it seems that Goldenberg suffered greatly from his own inadequacies and the fact that his comrades did not take him seriously. His desire to become ‘famous’ was undoubtedly a response to this depreciation of his personality and ability. Yet, behind the theatrical exterior, there was a man totally committed to the revolutionary cause, seriously and selflessly dedicated to its demands, ready to sacrifice his life to protect comrades – as Deich says, ‘*for a khaver volt er dos leben obgeben*’.³⁵

For all his alleged limitations Goldenberg was nonetheless quite active in revolutionary affairs. Passing through the usual apprenticeship of Populist radicalism, Goldenberg participated in circles of socialist ‘self-education’, conducted propaganda among peasants and students, distributed illegal literature (including Liberman’s socialist Hebrew journal *Ha-emes*), experienced repeated arrests, and finally was exiled to Northern Russia (Arkhangelsk province) in 1878. By this time he had become a professional revolutionary who ‘graduated with honours’ when he escaped from his exile and acquired the respectable status of an ‘illegal’. Fame had escaped him so far. Soon this was rectified, however. For when Deich met him again in the summer of 1879, Grisha had ‘suddenly become a “distinguished revolutionary”’.³⁶

The reason for the newly acquired celebrity was his assassination of Prince Dmitri Kropotkin, Governor of Kharkov, on 9 February 1879. This was the last successful attempt sponsored by the southern ‘Executive Committee’ just before Osinskii’s group came to a violent end in an armed confrontation with the police. Although the murder had been financed and organized by the ‘Executive Committee’, its idea and execution belonged exclusively to Goldenberg who, in December 1878, had proposed to undertake the attempt and offered his services for this purpose to the terrorists in Kiev. The idea had occurred to Goldenberg under the impression of a revolutionary pamphlet describing the suffering of political prisoners in the notorious central prison of Kharkov which was administered by the governor. In revenge, he decided to execute Prince Kropotkin for his ‘crimes’ against the revolutionary movement. This, as he saw it, would teach the government a lesson on the

one hand, and, on the other, shock the public at large into recognizing the plight of socialist activists and the need for political freedom in Russia.³⁷ Having gained the full support of the 'Executive Committee', he promptly carried out his plan.

Together with a Polish accomplice, L. Kobylanskii, he carefully observed Kropotkin's daily routine. Once they were reasonably certain that the governor usually returned home in the evening without an escort, they lay in wait for him. Seeing his carriage approach, Goldenberg quickly ran towards the vehicle, jumped on to its footboard and fired several shots, wounding fatally its passenger.

This act of terror marked Goldenberg's entree into the select inner circle of the terrorist movement, whose centre of gravity had already begun to shift northwards to St Petersburg. Its force attracted Goldenberg as well. A month later we find him among the Zemlevoltsy plotting another assassination – this time of Alexander II.

When Goldenberg arrived in St Petersburg in mid-March 1879 there was already a sizeable group of Zemlevoltsy who endorsed political terrorism. They were determined to continue the tradition of the now defunct southern 'Executive Committee'. In fact, just prior to his arrival, this group had organized the unsuccessful shooting of the Chief of Police, General A. Drenteln, by the Polish revolutionary Leon Mirsky. Justifying this attempt in a manifesto which again bore the seal of the 'Executive Committee of the Russian Social-Revolutionary Party', they wrote: 'a political assassination is above all an act of revenge, the only means of defence in the existing situation, and at the same time one of the best weapons of agitation'.³⁸ While the attempted killing was perhaps an 'agitational success', its immediate result was a massive police hunt for the perpetrators of this terrorist act. Unable to apprehend the would-be assassin and his backers, the police rounded up numerous persons suspected of political unreliability – and, as if because they suspected Jews particularly of such a crime, they arrested a considerable number of Jewish men and women residing in St Petersburg and charged them, among other things, with complicity in the shooting of Drenteln.³⁹

Most of the accused, thirteen altogether, were probably connected with Zemlia i Volia through Aron Zundeleovich. At least six had been associated previously with the Vilna circles of 1874–76. In all likelihood they continued their association with Zundeleovich and, in 1877–78, assisted him with organizing and maintaining Zemlia i Volia's underground, such as establishing the secret printing press for which the police were frantically searching. The others, except for one, might also have been involved in this activity by virtue of close personal ties and the fact

that most were related as members of the Koiranskii family. But since the police was unable to prove their complicity in the Mirsky affair, they could not be prosecuted. Instead, the authorities resorted to time-honoured administrative procedures: four were exiled to Siberia and the rest were deported to Vilna where they were placed under police surveillance.⁴⁰

Although none of the thirteen Vilna Jews can be directly linked to the Drenteln shooting, the police were not altogether wrong in suspecting Jewish terrorist complicity in the North. For, as in the South, there were indeed Jews who participated directly in Zemlia i Volia's terrorist activity, of which the Drenteln incident was merely the latest episode. The politically most significant act in this campaign had been Sergei Kravchinskii's fatal stabbing of Drenteln's predecessor, General N. Mezentsev, on 4 August 1878.

In this particular event two Jews, Zundeleovich and Iokhelson, rendered valuable assistance. The former served in the capacity of 'signaller' [*signal'shchik*], in which he had acquired a reputation for precision since fulfilling the same function in the successful liberation of Petr Kropotkin in 1876; the latter provided the get-away vehicle, a carriage which he had brought from Moscow by rail for this purpose.⁴¹ It all worked out splendidly. Zundeleovich accurately signalled the approach of Mezentsev and gave the 'green light' for Kravchinskii's murderous attack; and having accomplished the feat the assassin escaped unharmed in the carriage that had been secured by Iokhelson.

The real force behind the momentous Mezentsev assassination had been Olga Shleisner-Natanson who, together with Aleksei D. Oboleshev, had administered Zemlia i Volia since the arrest of her husband in 1877. This fact has generally been passed over by historians who focus their attention on Kravchinskii as the vengeful assassin of Mezentsev, and therefore as the instigator of political terror in the North.⁴² The attempt was actually initiated by Shleisner. Though revenge was certainly a factor in her determination to liquidate the Chief of Police, she was very much – and arguably more so than Kravchinskii – motivated by political objectives. These were spelled out by Oboleshev, Shleisner's right hand in managing the affairs of Zemlia i Volia. In connection with the assassination and the government's subsequent appeal to society for support against revolutionary subversion, he addressed the public in these terms: 'Russian society must learn not to beg but to strive for liberty. It must realize and organize itself to fight against the government. If Russian society begins to act in that direction ... then, of course, the socialists will give society their active support since we have one common goal – striving for political liberty.'⁴³

That Shleisner's and Oboleshev's motives were primarily political can also be documented with reference to their efforts to introduce explicitly 'political elements' into their party's programme as early as January 1878, when Zemlia i Volia's council met to reconsider theoretical and practical questions. Strongly supported by Zundelevich and Osinskii, they both cautiously proposed that Zemlia i Volia ought to declare its readiness to fight for a constitution and civil liberties.⁴⁴ But so ingrained was the anti-political attitude of the rank and file that they were forced to drop the matter quietly. The same was the case when Osinskii raised the question of 'strengthening disorganizational activity as one of the means to facilitate the realization of political liberty'.⁴⁵ As we know, Osinskii simply ignored the opposition and proceeded on his own to realize his vision of political struggle in southern Russia. Shleisner and her allies were equally undeterred by their defeat. However, being careful not to offend the 'apolitical majority', they, with much circumspection, continued in the Natansonist tradition by liberally interpreting the meaning of disorganization – hence the 'execution' of Mezentsev, a political act *par excellence*. In this fashion they allowed for the gradual explication of the political motif which through Natanson had been part of the make-up of Zemlia i Volia from its very inception.

This process of politicization did not halt even when, in October 1878, the police succeeded in striking at the very core of Zemlia i Volia – its 'administrative section' headed by Shleisner and Oboleshev. On the contrary, despite their arrest and the complete destruction of their headquarters, Zemlia i Volia soon reemerged as a more compact and politically more conscious organization. As the 'secret trustee' of the Lizogub fund, Zundelevich contributed 6,000 rubles towards the reconstruction of the centre, which was accomplished almost single-handedly by Shleisner's former protégé Aleksandr Mikhailov.⁴⁶ Like Natanson, he was a man of great organizational ability for whom the Natansonist imperatives of centralism, agitation, and disorganization were the hallmarks of effective revolutionary work. Guided by these principles, Mikhailov quickly rebuilt Zemlia i Volia. Concentrating especially on greater centralization and conspiratorial precaution, he brought the development of Zemlia i Volia to its logical conclusion. Following in the footsteps of Natanson and Shleisner, he reinforced the inherently political elements of Zemlia i Volia, and thus 'almost unintentionally gave rise to a new organization, the kernel of the future Narodnaia Volia'.⁴⁷

The leadership of Shleisner, Oboleshev, Zundelevich, and Mikhailov clearly exemplifies the degree to which the politicization of Zemlia i Volia was an autochthonous process rooted in its Natansonist heritage.

Considering themselves guardians of this heritage, these leaders pursued a course of action which they thought representative of Natanson's previous activity in creating and leading *Zemlia i Volia*.⁴⁸ Of course, they did not operate in a vacuum. There were obvious external factors (government persecution, liberal constitutionalism, the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–78, the drawn-out political trials of the '50' and '193', and the 'southern terrorism' of the same period) which greatly favoured the party's politicization. Indeed, there can be no doubt that especially the terrorism of the southern 'Executive Committee' contributed much to this development. But while its contribution – and thus the Jewish contribution as personified by Vittenberg, Gobet, and Goldenberg – consisted primarily in fermenting the right atmosphere for the growth of politics in revolutionary circles, it cannot be emphasized strongly enough that the seeds for such a development were planted by Natanson and fostered by his like-minded successors.

The 'seedlings' – centralism, agitation, and disorganization – carried within themselves the political destiny of *Zemlia i Volia*. Consequently, to paraphrase Franco Venturi, it was not the South, but the North that bore the fruits of terrorist ferment.⁴⁹ When Goldenberg came to St Petersburg in March 1879, 'the kernel of the future *Narodnaia Volia*' had already acquired shape in the form of a fairly compact group of *Zemlia i Volia* terrorists. Assuming the title of Osinskii's 'Executive Committee', they announced their existence by eliminating a dangerous police spy, Reinshtein, in February 1879, and removing an incompetent police chief, General Drenteln, several weeks later.

It was this new 'Executive Committee' which Grigorii Goldenberg encountered when he arrived in St Petersburg on 21 March 1879. He and his Polish comrade, L. Kobylanskii, immediately contacted its most prominent representatives, Zundelevich and Mikhailov. He informed them of his intention to shoot Alexander II – an idea which, as Goldenberg later admitted to police, had occurred to him soon after assassinating Kropotkin. But as it turned out Goldenberg and Kobylanskii were not the only would-be regicides. Although Goldenberg claimed that 'to him belonged the very idea of murdering the Tsar', it is on record that another revolutionary, A. K. Soloviev, had come to St Petersburg several weeks earlier for the same purpose.⁵⁰ Still his claim to 'originality' stands in so far as it was not until he put forth his proposal that this murderous scheme assumed concrete forms. In any case, there were three individuals who in March vied simultaneously for the dubious privilege of killing the Tsar.

Several meetings were arranged by the advocates of terrorism, Zundelevich, Mikhailov, and A. A. Kviatkovskii, to discuss the attempt

and to decide who ought to execute the feat. As Goldenberg relates in his testimony, his proposition to kill the Tsar was rejected on the grounds that he was a Jew, and Kobylanskii a Pole: 'It was felt absolutely necessary that the evildoer should definitely be a Russian.'⁵¹ Both Mikhailov and Zundeleovich were concerned about the negative effects the assassination might have on public opinion and, especially, on government policy *vis-à-vis* any 'stratum or nationality' if it were carried out by a non-Russian.

Goldenberg's bid was particularly questioned by Zundeleovich who, as he said himself, 'energetically opposed this because of the general tendency of the Christian world to ascribe to the whole Jewish nation a crime perpetrated by one of its members. In the given case, the verdict of guilty could easily be turned into an accusation of all Jews.'⁵² Obviously, this consideration made Soloviev the natural choice. And so, on 2 April 1879, Soloviev made his ill-fated attempt. He fired five pistol shots at Alexander II – but none of the bullets hit its target.

The Soloviev affair launched Zemlia i Volia irrevocably along the path of political violence. It marked that point in its history where for the sake of political gains systematic terror superseded the principle of occasional, vindictive reprisals against traitors, spies, provocateurs, and hated representatives of tsarist power. But by the same token it also signalled the beginning of the end of Zemlia i Volia as a unified organization because many of its members refused to take the new path of politically motivated terrorism.

The rift between those who were still committed solely to agitational propaganda, the orthodox *narodniki* (also known as 'country-folk' or *derevenshchiki*), and those who were attracted to political terrorism, the revisionist 'politicals', had clearly revealed itself over the issue of whether Zemlia i Volia should endorse and support the Soloviev attempt. When the issue was raised by Mikhailov at a general meeting of Zemlia i Volia the orthodox Zemlevoltsy adamantly refused to have anything to do with the regicide and even threatened to sabotage its execution. The result of what turned out to be an extremely stormy and almost violent meeting was an uneasy compromise. It was agreed that Zemlia i Volia disassociate itself from Soloviev, but that individual members were allowed to support him on their own initiative. The damage was done, however. Henceforth, each faction guarded its own interests and went its own way. In the late summer of 1879 this situation had become so intolerable that it was finally agreed to dissolve Zemlia i Volia and to form two separate organizations instead: the terrorist party of Narodnaia Volia, and the *narodnik* party of Chernyi Peredel.

As might have been expected from the intensive Jewish participation in the rise of political terrorism, Jews were also prominent in the formation of Narodnaia Volia. This process had begun already in May 1879 when in the aftermath of the Soloviev controversy the 'politicals' formed their own group within Zemlia i Volia. Having been rebuffed by the majority for their support of Soloviev in particular and their advocacy of terrorism in general, Mikhailov and his like-minded comrades, including Zundeleovich of course, secretly created their own organizational infrastructure in the form of a group which assumed the name of Liberty or Death. Its dozen or so members included Goldenberg and Aizik Borisovich Aronchik (1859–88). Although Zundeleovich (like Mikhailov) was not formally a member of the group, he actually sponsored its activity and provided it with materials to build up its technical apparatus for producing dynamite and, if necessary, for printing its own brochures to expound the policy and method of political terrorism.

From this techno-organizational foundation the group, as noted by Franco Venturi, 'rapidly increased its size and weight and became the centre of all those who were determined to break out of the bounds imposed by the programme of Zemlia i Volia'. Liberty or Death quickly assumed the shape of 'a centralized, hierarchical, disciplined organization' which soon shed its secretive character and even succeeded in legitimizing its existence as Zemlia i Volia's Executive Committee at a general congress of Zemlevoltsy in Voronezh held from 18 to 21 June 1879.⁵³ This Executive Committee was no longer a fictitious entity symbolizing the desire of some disillusioned Populists to commit political assassinations – it was an organized entity determined to pursue a policy of systematic terror aiming at revolution. Indeed, this was a new organization which, though officially still part of Zemlia i Volia, was *de facto* already the organizational nucleus of Narodnaia Volia, the kernel of its Executive Committee, which constituted itself in the fall of 1879.

As members of Liberty or Death, Goldenberg and Aronchik were directly involved in the process that led to the creation of Narodnaia Volia. Both were active in making converts to the terrorist cause and promoting the establishment of a 'strong fighting organization' within Zemlia i Volia.⁵⁴ But it was Zundeleovich who played a pivotal role. He was one of those who forcefully insisted that the group convene its own congress at Lipetsk just prior to the one in Voronezh in order to increase its membership, to formalize its organizational structure, and to formulate its platform. This would allow the group to confront the general meeting of Zemlevoltsy as an organizationally and politically unified body capable of delivering an articulate defence in favour of

terrorism – in short, of presenting a veritable *fait accompli*. Although Zundeleovich was not able to attend either congress, he helped to engineer the terrorists' 'coup' at Voronezh where they in fact succeeded in convincing the majority, the *derevenshchiki*, to acquiesce in their special status as Zemlia i Volia's 'fighting organization'.⁵⁵

But the compromise hardly survived the Voronezh congress. Conflicts over material resources and ideological principles inexorably brought about the break-up of Zemlia i Volia. Recognizing the inevitable, Zundeleovich, together with other leading Zemlevoltsy, proposed to negotiate a peaceful divorce. This was accepted by both parties. They agreed to drop the name 'Zemlia i Volia' – or rather divided it: the 'land' went to the *derevenshchiki* as implied by their new designation Chernoperedeltsy, the 'will' to the terrorists who now called themselves Narodovoltsy.

All that remained was to divide the household, the finances and hardware of the revolutionary underground. As a member of the 'divorce committee', Zundeleovich secured for Narodnaia Volia the printing press with a large stockpile of type, the 'passport bureau' or 'heavenly chancellery', and four to five times as much money as went to the coffers of Chernyi Peredel. The latter discrepancy was not known at the time by anyone except Zundeleovich who provided Narodnaia Volia with a starting capital of 8,000 rubles that had been in his possession as trustee of a special fund earmarked for the assassination of Alexander II in accordance with the expressed wishes of its donor, Dmitrii Lizogub. In addition to this money and all other vital resources, the terrorists, needless to say, also retained the 'dynamite workshop' which they had set up with Zundeleovich's assistance already in the days of Liberty or Death. Equally unnegotiable was the ownership of the so-called 'Department of Foreign Affairs' which was headed by Zundeleovich. In other words, the whole network of underground communications, conspiratorial quarters, and transport facilities fell under the control of Narodnaia Volia by virtue of Zundeleovich's management of this sphere of activity.⁵⁶ Evidently, Zundeleovich deserves most of the credit for the rapid establishment of an effective terrorist organization that was unprecedented in the revolutionary history of Russia. In acknowledgement of his indispensable service, he was one of the first to be elected to Narodnaia Volia's Executive Committee.

The rivals of Narodnaia Volia, the Chernoperedeltsy, had to get by without the services of Zundeleovich. Nonetheless they created an organization which, at least until 1881, seriously challenged the seemingly uncontested supremacy of the Narodovoltsy in the revolutionary movement. That this was possible must be attributed in no small

measure to those Jewish activists who had refused to join the party of political terrorism. Indeed, it is questionable whether without them Chernyi Peredel would have come into being.

When the leader of the *derevenshchiki*, Georgii Plekhanov, refused to strike a compromise with the terrorists at the Voronezh congress, he found no support among his like-minded comrades, who wanted to preserve the unity of Zemlia i Volia at all costs. At that moment he had lost all hope of salvaging the 'old' Zemlia i Volia, and seriously thought of abandoning his revolutionary career altogether. Plekhanov might well have done so had it not been for Deich and his comrades, Zasulich and Stefanovich, who had arrived back in Russia just after the congress at which they had been coopted *in absentia* into Zemlia i Volia. Not feeling bound by the agreement reached in Voronezh, they, especially Deich, opposed the compromise solution and ranged themselves behind Plekhanov to fight it out with the terrorists.⁵⁷

Besides Deich there was a surprisingly large number of Jews who preferred Plekhanov's Populist orthodoxy to terrorist political revisionism, thus contributing significantly to the creation of Chernyi Peredel. Of these the most prominent were Osip Aptekman, Pavel Akselrod, and Rozaliia Markovna Bograd, Plekhanov's future wife and life-long revolutionary companion. Resisting the courting of the Narodovoltsy, they joined the anti-terrorist camp and, together with Deich, played a crucial role in the party as organizers, propagandists, and publicists. Deich consolidated the St Petersburg central circle and established close links with affiliated groups in Moscow, Odessa and elsewhere; Aptekman edited *Chernyi Peredel* and wrote the first and extremely well received programmatic statement of the group. Akselrod was their prestigious ally in Odessa and, later on, resurrected the St Petersburg organization when its erstwhile leadership was either arrested (Aptekman) or driven into exile (Plekhanov, Deich, and Zasulich); finally, Rozaliia Bograd was Plekhanov's dedicated assistant whose unwavering personal loyalty greatly enhanced his ability to lead the party in its difficult task of facing up to the challenge of Narodnaia Volia.⁵⁸

Jewish participation in Chernyi Peredel, throughout its short existence as an organized entity between 1879 and 1881, extended beyond the presence of 'famous revolutionary Jews' in its leadership. In addition to Deich, Aptekman, and Akselrod, there were at least another fifteen Jews who as members of Chernyi Peredel (which had a combined membership of approximately 100 persons) were very active in the organization – some as propagandists, others as proverbial 'technicians' of the underground.⁵⁹ In the latter category, they proved indispensable for the establishment of transport routes, communication networks, and pub-

lishing facilities. 'Guarding the frontier', they supplied the major Chernyi Peredel groups in St Petersburg and Moscow with literature and other miscellanea from abroad, and, along the same route, Kovno-Belostok-Minsk, conveyed 'illegals' across the border and generally kept the *émigré* Chernoperedeltsy informed of party affairs in Russia.

Minsk was the terminal and clearing house of much of this activity. Here a fairly large group of local radicals, which had evolved out of Chernyi-Rabinovich's circle of 1875-76 (see chapter 4), maintained a 'passport office' and, most importantly, operated the second printing press of Chernyi Peredel (the first, located in St Petersburg, survived only until January 1880). Built and operated by Iosif N. Getsov, Saul L. Grinfest, and Saul Lvovich, the press worked ceaselessly until the end of 1881, so ensuring the continuous publication of Chernyi Peredel literature, including the party's journal by the same name and its supplement for workers, *Zerno*. Other important members of the circle were Leon Nosovich, S. Volfson, and Isaak Gurvich, who, besides supporting the 'printers', helped to organize the escape of imprisoned comrades. Propaganda was also high on their agenda – not among the peasants though, as the orthodox ideology of Chernyi Peredel prescribed, but among local secondary students and Jewish workers. Finally, of course, they handled the business of transporting and distributing the literary products of their printing press, shuttling back and forth between Minsk, St Petersburg, and Moscow.⁶⁰

Jewish names also rank prominently in the chronicles of Chernyi Peredel propaganda in the capitals. Besides Aptekman and Deich, of whom the latter was very active in Moscow until 1880, outstanding propagandists were Evgeniia Iakovleva Rubanchik and Mikhail Isaakovich Sheftel. Both were active in St Petersburg during the leadership of Akselrod in the so-called 'second tier' (*vtoroi prizyv*) of Chernyi Peredel, in 1880-81. Besides acting as 'liaison' between the St Petersburg Chernoperedeltsy and their comrades in Switzerland (Plekhanov, Deich, and Zasulich), Rubanchik energetically conducted propaganda among workers and students. Sheftel coedited the party's journal and contributed several articles to it.⁶¹ To detail their contributions, as well as that of other Jewish activists, would fill many more pages. Yet, even this cursory sketch allows us to see that in Chernyi Peredel, no less than in Narodnaia Volia, Jews were prominently active on all levels of revolutionary work.

This prominence of Jews was, of course, a reflection of their role in the rise of political terrorism and the break-up of Zemlia i Volia. Both as terrorists and anti-terrorists, they were in the forefront of events which

politicized the Populist movement and, in 1879, brought forth Narodnaia Volia and Chernyi Peredel. The historical significance of these newly formed parties was enormous for the Russian revolution. Dominating revolutionary politics throughout the 1880s, Narodnaia Volia kept alive the populist-liberal tradition which a decade later entered into the making of the Party of Constitutional Democrats (Kadets) and the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries (PSR). Divesting itself of orthodox Populism in the mid-1880s, Chernyi Peredel entered the mainstream of European Marxist socialism and became the point of departure for Russian Marxism and the formation of the Russian Social Democratic Workers Party (RSDWP). Jewish Narodovoltsy and Chernoperedeltsy pioneered these new developments, which matured at the turn of the century and blossomed during the revolution of 1905.

Part 3

The Party of the People's Will: Jewish terrorists of socialist conviction, 1879–1887

With the establishment of Narodnaia Volia the 'Jewish mission' of infusing Russian revolutionary Populism with a party-political dimension complementing, if not transcending, its social-revolutionary fixation had been accomplished. Still outstanding was the related Westernizing 'mission' of introducing social-democratic forms of revolutionary activity into Russia. Although Lev Ginzburg had pioneered the introduction of German social-democratic practices among the St Petersburg Lavrovists in the mid-1870s, it was not until after 1879 that this task was again taken up by Jews: at first by Jewish Chernoperedeltsy, and later on by Jewish Narodovoltsy in their non-terrorist workers' propaganda. This role of the Jews and the fact that they were active in both Chernyi Peredel and Narodnaia Volia raises the intriguing question whether Jewish revolutionaries were actually influenced – consciously or unconsciously – by Jewish motives in joining either the party of political terror or the party of social revolution.

Prima facie, it would appear that considering the 'political' and 'Western' inclination of socialist Jews they should have altogether switched their allegiance to Narodnaia Volia. This party offered a new form of revolutionary struggle. Advocating a direct confrontation with tsarism, it sought to achieve the immediate goals of civil liberties and political freedom – goals which did strike a responsive cord among all progressive minded Jews. As a matter of fact this was the principal reason why, in the 1880s, Narodnaia Volia became the focal-point of Jewish identification with revolutionary Russia. But such an identification, and corresponding shift towards Narodnaia Volia, was not obvious in the beginning of the decade when Chernyi Peredel still claimed the loyalty of many Jews. How is one to explain this apparent anomaly? What made some Jews identify with the Chernyi Peredel and others with Narodnaia Volia? Was their Jewishness of any relevance in this choice of allegiance? This entails a discussion of Jewish motives of revolution that brings to light fundamental aspects of Jewishness which motivated Jews in their

revolutionary commitment and characterized their disposition as Chernoperebel'tsy and Narodovol'tsy.

The exploration of these themes in chapter 8 raises yet another set of questions which will be addressed subsequently. Most obviously, what precisely was the contribution of Jews to the terrorism of Narodnaia Volia, which claimed the life of Alexander II in 1881 and frightened the Russian government throughout the 1880s? For it was this decade that made tsarist officials and reactionary monarchists believe that Jews were primarily responsible for perpetuating the terrorist tradition after this party had ceased to exist as an organized entity in 1882. Finally, there is also the question of how Jewish radicals responded to the growing antisemitic atmosphere which not only enveloped 'official Russia', but also elements of 'the people' and some of its revolutionary guardians. How did they cope with this disturbing phenomenon?

8 Motives of revolution

Despite the obvious presence of Jews in Chernyi Peredel, it has been argued that Jews *qua* Jews were more attracted to Narodnaia Volia because political terrorism was more congenial to Jewish participation than the theory and practice of traditional Populism. In this view – most forcefully put forth by Elias Tscherikower – the new political orientation and its urban-centred terrorist activity significantly ‘broadened the range of possibilities for Jewish revolutionaries – both psychologically and factually’. Factually, it provided Jews with the unprecedented opportunity to be active in an urban environment that was much more conducive to their natural abilities and national characteristics: instead of acting as propagandists in the name of an alien ideology in an alien peasant environment, they now were able to partake in activities where their Jewishness was less of a liability than previously. Without feeling a sense of inferiority, without necessarily divesting themselves of their Jewish traits, as Narodovoltsy they could participate fully and effectively in the sort of work for which they were ideally suited as Jews. In short, their characteristically Jewish abilities of ‘underground organization’ and ‘technical know-how’ were a real asset readily appreciated and sought after by their Russian comrades. Psychologically, Narodnaia Volia provided Jews with a political rationale for revolutionary action that was much more in tune with their experience of Jewish rightlessness than Populist abstractions of social revolution.¹

Leaving aside for the moment the hypothesis that the fight for political freedom was more attractive to the Jewish psyche than Populist peasantism, it is difficult to go along with the argument that the urban character and technical requirements of terrorism vastly extended the scope of Jewish involvement. For regardless of the ‘peasantism’ of Populism, the ‘urban underground’ had always been a sphere readily accessible to Jews who chose to follow a revolutionary calling. In practice all the Populist organizations of the 1870s were essentially urban in origin and location, and as such offered ample opportunities for Jews to work ‘suitably’ as organizers and technicians. This was also true with

respect to Chernyi Peredel which, in spite of its Populist orthodoxy, operated almost exclusively among the urban strata of workers and students. Therefore, factually, the situation had not changed much. But Tscherikower offers a better explanation in arguing that, psychologically, the new atmosphere of political terrorism was much more appealing to Jews than the old apolitical verities of Populist socialism.

On the whole one can readily appreciate Tscherikower's statement that 'the real psychological force which drove so many Jews into the camp of the "politicals" and the terrorists was *di yidishe rekhtlozikeyt*, the hope for political freedom which, according to prevailing contemporary opinion, would also resolve the Jewish question'.² Even tsarist officials were convinced that civil disabilities were the real cause of Jewish extremism. Thus in the Mirsky affair they accused Jews not only of assisting the terrorists, but also of organizing a '*secret Jewish society*' dedicated to fight for the abolition of anti-Jewish legislation.³ Quite rationally, they assumed that radical Jews were by definition *Jewish* radicals, and therefore were motivated by the suffering and emancipatory strivings of their own people. In this they were not completely mistaken. For, implicitly, Jews were indeed attracted to revolutionary activity – and terror in particular – due to specific Jewish circumstances.

Tsarist officials were wrong, however, in attributing to radical Jews motives exclusively concerned with promoting the Jewish cause of emancipation and of organizing revolutionary societies to this effect. As cosmopolitan socialists they sought to resolve the Jewish Question as part of a larger solution – namely, the liberation of all oppressed groups, Jewish workers included; as revolutionary Populists they thought that all this could be achieved only by joining an all-Russian revolutionary movement. Hence neither the Jews in the Mirsky case, nor the majority of Jews in the movement, thought of advancing primarily, or even just socialist, *Jewish* interests. But having said this, it is equally important to emphasize that on many occasions Jews were quite explicit in their concern for things Jewish and in linking their revolutionary dedication with Jewish aspirations.

The person that comes to mind most readily is Aron Zundeleovich, 'the most Jewish Jew among Jewish revolutionaries', who, says Tscherikower, 'surely chose for himself intentionally the party-name "Moishe"'.⁴ In him the Jewish motif was never far below the surface, and repeatedly came to light in situations which forced him to reveal his sense of Jewish identity and loyalty. His adamant opposition to Goldenberg's request to be allowed to assassinate the Tsar is a case in point. Even more revealing is Sergei Kravchinskii's portrayal of Zundeleovich in *The Career of a Nihilist*.

Casting Zundeleovich in the role of David Stirn, Kravchinskii explicates the Jewishness of his friend 'Moishe' in a soul-searching conversation with the hero of the novel, Andrey, who in typical Populist fashion objects to David's endorsement of the terrorists' demand 'to fight the autocracy, and to win political freedom for Russia'. David vivaciously replies: 'you Russians hate to deal with positive things that you can touch with your fingers; you must always have some fantastical nonsense to muddle your heads with. It runs in your blood, I think.' Getting at the root of their disagreement, the conversation continues:

'Don't be so harsh upon us', said Andrey, smiling at his friend's sally. 'If George's [Plekhanov's] belief in Russia and in our peasants' superior virtues is pushed too far, what harm is there? Are you not repeating the same things about your beloved German working-men in general, and those of Berlin in particular?'

'That's quite another thing', said David. 'This isn't a belief, but a prognostication of the future, based upon the solid ground of existing facts.'

'The same sauce, my dear fellow, but somewhat thinner', said Andrey. 'You cannot help idealising what you are strongly attached to. With all your philosophy, you are not a bit wiser than we are; only your preferences are placed elsewhere. We are strongly attached to our people, you are not.'

David did not answer for a long time. Andrey's words had touched a very sore point in his heart.

'No, I am not attached to your people', he said at last, with a slow sad voice. 'Why should I be? We Jews, we love our race, which is all we have on the earth. I love it deeply and warmly. Why should I love your peasants, who hate and ill-treat my people with blind barbarity? who to-morrow will perhaps loot the house of my father, an honourable working-man, and brutally assault him, as they have done to thousands of other poor hard-working Jews? I can pity your peasants for their sufferings, as I would pity some Abyssinian or Malay slave, or an ill-used living creature; but my heart will never beat for them, and I cannot share your vain dreams, and foolish admiration for them. As to so called society, the upper classes, why! what but contempt can one feel for such wholesale cowards? No, there is nothing in your Russia worth caring for. But I knew the Nihilists, and I loved them even more than my own race. I joined and fraternised with them, and that is the only tie which binds me to your country. As soon as we have done with your Tsar's despotism, I shall expatriate myself for ever, and settle somewhere in Germany ... Germany is the only land where we are not total strangers.'⁵

This passage puts forth in bold relief Zundeleovich's distinctly Jewish mentality and implicitly Jewish motives. Except for minor details there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of Kravchinskii's characterization.⁶ It bears witness to the fact that Zundeleovich was not ashamed of his Jewishness and, as a political terrorist, was very much concerned about the Jewish predicament. This mode of Jewish consciousness and thinking can also be detected in other Jewish 'politicals', especially in people like Leizer Tsukerman and Grigorii Gurevich. If less explicitly, it was also

shared by Vittenberg, Gobet, Goldenberg, and others whose story will be told shortly. They, and even Zundeleovich himself, may not have been fully aware of the psychological force which motivated them to fight for political freedom: yet their views and actions were laced by a Jewish motif woven from the fabric of Jewish life in conditions of civic *rekhtlozikeyt*, social marginality, and ethno-cultural estrangement.

That this motif was a potent force in the political radicalization of Jews – not only a subconscious element, but also as a conscious motivation – is evident from the correspondence of a future St Petersburg Narodovolets, Abram Maksimovich Magat, with his like-minded sister in Vilna. He wrote to her in November 1879:

Jews understand that they lack freedom, lack rights [*rekht*]. How is this possible: we are the most ancient, intelligent, civilized, and energetic people – and yet they deprive us of the rights which all other subjects in Russia have already, [they] do not even allow us to conduct our businesses! No, we must ourselves get this freedom and equality, may happen what will! ... I see two and a half million people in slavery and say: *one is allowed to side with the humiliated and unprotected people*, one is allowed to conquer freedom for them. And would the people want to rise *en masse* against their oppressors, I want to arm myself with a dagger and revolver [emblem of Narodnaia Volia's E. C.] and fight the war for their freedom ... The printed word has already explained the Jewish plight in Russia, and the Congress of Berlin has given them equality. True only on paper for now ... [but] if Russia gets a constitution due to profound revolutionary upheavals, Jews will also gain equal rights.⁷

Tscherikower, who cites the letter *in toto*, rightly notes that the sentiment expressed here must not be viewed in isolation. Although such motives were rarely voiced as frankly by others, including Zundeleovich, this frame of mind was surely shared by the vast majority of Jews who under the influence of anti-Jewish pogroms and growing Jewish *rekhtlozikeyt* swelled the ranks of Narodnaia Volia in the 1880s.

At this point one could comfortably make do with the psycho-political explanation of conscious or unconscious Jewish motives were it not for the fact that quite a few Jews threw in their lot with the orthodox Populists of Chernyi Peredel, who remained ideologically committed to the mobilization of the peasant masses for a social revolution *à la Russe*. Historians like Tscherikower, who see *rekhtlozikeyt* as the fundamental cause of Jewish involvement in terrorist activity, have tended to trivialize the participation of Jews in Chernyi Peredel as an exception that proves the rule.⁸ True, only a handful of Jews became Chernoperedeltsy compared to the hundreds who joined Narodnaia Volia in the 1880s. But in 1879–80 this disparity was less marked. While the majority of Jews may have allied themselves with the 'politicals', their distribution

between the two parties in question was, at this time, proportional to that of their Gentile comrades – and there may even have been a slight disproportion in favour of Chernyi Peredel. Does this mean that Jewish Chernoperebeltsy lacked the Jewishness that seems to have characterized their counterparts in Narodnaia Volia? Were they singularly devoid of inherently Jewish motives in remaining loyal to ‘traditional Populism’? Were they not at all influenced by the same ‘psychological force’, the same Jewish motif, which we have detected in Zundeleovich? To answer these questions positively would imply that the Akselrods were less *Jewish* than the Zundeleoviches. This is hardly a tenable position. For, as will be shown directly, the former exhibited, by and large, the same characteristically Jewish traits which Sergei Kravchinskii attributed to ‘Moishe’.

Regardless of their revolutionary denomination, Jews (and this includes Utin of the first Zemlia i Volia) collectively shared a common Jewish experience, a common Jewish cosmopolitanism, a common Western inclination, especially towards German Social Democracy, and finally a common belief in a socialist utopia that was rooted in their alienation as Jews. Granted there were nuances of difference between them, but in general all the specifically Jewish elements in their ideological and psychological disposition corresponded to those which Kravchinskii, in the case of Zundeleovich, contrasts with the Populist disposition of his Russian hero: namely, their cosmopolitanism as opposed to Russian particularism, their European socialist internationalism as opposed to Populist rural romanticism, their appreciation of political freedom as opposed to the ‘fantastic nonsense’ of an immediate peasant revolution, and their fraternity with nihilist intellectuals as opposed to identification with the Russian people. For the most part, their revolutionary *Weltanschauung* was akin to Natanson’s nihilist-Populism. Indeed, as Jews, they represented an atypical phenomenon in revolutionary Populism.

The fact that they were Jews obviously made a difference. It was a difference which manifested itself in their particular ideological and political standpoints within both Chernyi Peredel and Narodnaia Volia rather than in their preference for this or that party. Therefore, the issue of specifically Jewish motivations supersedes the simplified correlation of *rekhtlozikeyt* and political engagement.

Jewish Chernoperebeltsy were never quite comfortable with the Populist orthodoxy and anti-political stance of their party. Their opposition to political terrorism was ambiguous and came to the fore only after much hesitation. Both Aptekman and Akselrod appreciated the need for civil

liberties; neither was opposed to political terror in principle. The reason why in the end they sided with Plekhanov was because, in their view, the Narodovoltsy discounted 'the people' as a democratic force in the struggle for political and social revolution. They could not accept Narodnaia Volia's elitism which, they felt, would lead neither to democratic socialism nor democratic constitutionalism. Unlike Zundel'evich, they persisted in the belief that in Russia, as in Western Europe, political freedom should and could be secured democratically for and by the labouring masses. They were not willing to abandon 'the people', but insisted on continuing agitation in order to imbue them with a political will of their own. Besides close ties of friendship with Plekhanov and other anti-terrorists, this finally swayed them, but only slowly and tortuously, to join the orthodox camp in spite of the fact that, as far as Akselrod was concerned, its Populism 'smacked of Slavophil medievalism'. Indeed, Akselrod made his cooperation with the Chernopereveltsy conditional on being allowed to express his unorthodox opinion freely in print and by word of mouth.⁹

When Akselrod joined Chernyi Peredel he immediately strove to give the party a 'Western image'. Irrked by 'the anachronistic and medieval' connotations of its name, which for him symbolized the anti-Western tendency of Populism, he proposed the new designation Party of Socialist-Federalists to emphasize the 'ideological connection with the "federated International"'. Although the new name was eventually approved for use in conjunction with Chernyi Peredel, it was at first strongly resisted on the grounds that, in case of revolution, the federal principle would endanger the national integrity of Russia, and that 'perhaps the people will be against this'. His a-Populist reply was characteristic for a *Jewish* Populist: 'And if the people want to beat the Jews? ... If the people want to oppose the separation of Poland from Russia – then, must we go along with the people also? No! As *socialists* we cannot restrict our goals exclusively to the wishes and desires of the people in a given moment [or let ourselves be] dictated to by the prejudices of their desires [*zhelaniia*].'¹⁰ On this occasion his argument was persuasive enough to convince the majority of Chernopereveltsy. However, it was only a prelude to Akselrod's more ambitious 'reforms' designed to bring the party in line with his already strongly developed social-democratic sentiments.

After the forced departure of the erstwhile leadership of Chernyi Peredel and Aptekman's arrest in January 1880, Akselrod became the sole leader of the St Petersburg organization. Reconstituting a new 'central group', which he eventually christened 'Northern-Russian Society of Zemlia i Volia', he composed a new programme whose social-

democratic content was strongly resented by veteran Chernoperedeltsy, both within and outside Russia. When Akselrod's *delegatka*, Evgeniia Rubanchik, submitted the programme for approval to the *émigré* Chernoperedeltsy, she was told: 'This is not Populism but social-democratism.'¹¹ The programme caused even more consternation among St Petersburg Chernoperedeltsy of orthodox conviction. Recalling their opposition, one of them later wrote:

Pavel Akselrod was the only member of the central body of Black Repartition still left in St Petersburg ... He proceeded to read to us the new programme he had drawn up for Black Repartition. It was a very diffuse draft for something between populism and Marxism – an impossible mixture. I can't reconstruct it from memory, but of this I'm sure: political objectives had made deep inroads into the populist program, and Western social-democratic methods had permeated its tactics. We found the program totally unacceptable ...¹²

The author of these lines, Elizaveta Kovalskaia, and her like-minded friend, Nikolai Shchedrin, left the party. The others, particularly Jewish members, preferred the new direction Akselrod tried to give Chernyi Peredel – a direction which brought about its transformation into the Emancipation of Labour Group. The real founder of this first Marxist organization was Lev Deich; the chief ideologues were Pavel Akselrod and Georgii Plekhanov; and its 'support staff' were the former Minsk Chernoperedeltsy Saul Grinfest, Iosif Getsov, and Efim Levkov, five out of six being Jewish.

The Jewish role in the formation of early Russian Social Democracy cannot be the subject of this investigation, though it is pertinent to note that the Emancipation of Labour Group synthesized the Jewish predilection for political liberties with Western socialism.¹³ However, Jews in Narodnaia Volia exhibited similar preferences which, as in the case of Jewish Chernoperedeltsy, were an outward indication of their a-Populist Jewish mentality and their spiritual affiliation with Western forms of social and political radicalism. But instead of arriving at a social-democratic synthesis of their political and socialist aspirations, they choose to emphasize political objectives at the expense of long-term socialist, though not necessarily Populist, ends.

Regardless of their faith in socialism, exhibited most succinctly by the social-democratic convictions of the *zapadnik* Zundeleovich, Narodovoltsy Jews distinguished themselves by their almost purely political approach to Russian revolutionary affairs. The Jewish motif in their revolutionary *Weltanschauung* made them 'constitutionalists' in the Russian context, and 'social democrats' in their appreciation of European socialism. For the immediate future the struggle for political freedom

proved more compelling to them, as well as to the vast majority of revolutionary Jews in the 1880s. But, like in Chernyi Peredel, this preference stood out as a distinctly Jewish viewpoint on the spectrum of ideo-political opinion in Narodnaia Volia.

Although unified in giving priority to political terrorism, there was much disagreement among the Narodovoltsy over the nature and objectives of their revolutionary struggle. Some were 'pure' or anarchistic terrorists, who viewed terrorism as a 'contemporary form of revolution' that would organically evolve new egalitarian forms of social order due to a responsive 'people' seeking to destroy tsarism and develop its own communal mode of existence; others were Tkachevist Jacobins, who desired to bring down the government by a *coup d'état* with the aim of 'decreeing a new [social] structure'; still others, the majority, were conventional Populists, who thought of terrorism as a means to invest 'the people' – the socialistically inclined masses – with political sovereignty by either destroying the government or forcing it to call a Constituent Assembly that would be 'above all else a "liquidating commission" of the old order'. Finally, there were some – a negligible minority – who were 'radical constitutionalists' for whom the conquest of political and civil liberties, without any immediate socialist benefits, was a legitimate and sufficient goal in itself.¹⁴

Subsuming the first three positions and juxtaposing them with the fourth, Sh. M. Levin concluded that 'together with people dreaming about the realization of a simultaneous social and political revolution, there were in "Narodnaia Volia" also people who directly expected from their efforts ... only the establishment of bourgeois-democratic, political institutions, and there were also people who were interested exclusively in achieving [only] these latter goals'.¹⁵ The 'latter goals', it should be added, were primarily the concern of Jews whose disposition was exemplified, *par excellence*, by the so-called 'pure constitutionalism' of Aron Zundeleovich and Savelii Zlatopolskii, and, paradoxically enough, by Grigorii Goldenberg's betrayal of Narodnaia Volia in the naive expectation that the tsarist government would, in turn, promulgate constitutional reforms.¹⁶

Savelii Zlatopolskii, whom we have already encountered as an activist among the Jewish youth of Nikolaev in 1875–76, had never been at ease with Populist prescriptions. While still a Lavrovist, he was dissatisfied with the overly theoretical bent of Lavrov's writings which, he felt, were ignoring contemporary Russian reality by concentrating too much on the 'preparation' of a future social revolution. But his own views on socialism and the task of a revolutionary party crystallized only after Lavrovism and other early Populist 'isms' had been discredited by the disastrous

'going to the people' movement and were displaced by Zemlia i Volia's *narodnichestvo*. Although he was pleased that the new party was much more pragmatic in its application of socialist theory and practice to Russian conditions than had been the case with Lavrovism, he was still opposed to its excessive preoccupation with social revolution at the expense of realistic political approaches to the betterment of Russian society.¹⁷

To put it bluntly, Zlatopolskii's orientation was too political to be accommodated within the framework of *narodnichestvo*. Explaining his own atypical Populist thinking, and thus the reasons why he stayed aloof from the mainstream revolutionary movement between 1877 and 1879, he stated:

My guiding principle was to recognize the significance of socialism as the creed of the party [*veroispovedenie partii*] and to give it its proper place. [However, the party's] most immediate task [had to be] to change the existing structure of political life in such a way that the people should have the possibility to participate in deciding questions of Russian life in general – i.e., according to my formulations: the revolutionary party abolishes neither the state, nor religion, nor property, nor the family, but, proceeding from existing political and social reality, must direct all [its] efforts to the introduction of popular representative institutions in Russia.¹⁸

Clearly, like Zundelevich, Zlatopolskii was ahead of developments in Russian revolutionary Populism. Too much at odds with Zemlia i Volia's 'estrangement from questions of a purely political character at the expense of purely socialist elements', he – unlike Zundelevich though – was unable to preach his unorthodox convictions as a Zemlevolets. Spurned by the party's following in Odessa, Zlatopolskii remained a 'free-lance revolutionary' who propagated his own 'idea of political revolution' until he found a place for his heretical views in Narodnaia Volia.¹⁹

The place he finally occupied in the party and more particularly in the Executive Committee on the issue of constitutional government made him, along with Zundelevich, a representative of that 'radical-constitutionalist tendency'²⁰ which was mainly a property of Jewish Narodovoltsy. Zlatopolskii knew that his position was not popular and, as such, carried little weight in the Executive Committee whose members considered political struggle as a means of transforming Russia, more or less immediately, into a socialist country. For him, as for Zundelevich, this was utopian idealism which hindered rather than facilitated what he considered the most important task of the party – namely, the establishment of a political order which eventually, but only eventually, would allow for the gradual evolution of a socialist society such as was

already shaping up in Western Europe due to social-democratic mass movements. Both were strikingly similar in their appreciation of Western constitutional forms of government and in their belief that socialism was a gradual evolutionary process. Consequently, they also agreed that in Russia a social-revolutionary had to suspend his socialist activities to fight first and foremost for political liberty and civic equality. In proto-Bernsteinian fashion they argued that the practical goals of the party should not, in Zlatopolskii's words, be 'connected with the forcible realization of socialist ideals'.²¹ Socialism for them was an ethical imperative, the spiritual *raison d'être* of their revolutionary commitment, but it had no place in the actual arena of revolutionary practice, since it was premature to fight for a socialist transformation of Russia.

Perhaps the most striking and grotesque example of how strongly Jews felt about political-constitutional priorities was Grigorii Goldenberg's infamous attempt to trade terrorism for constitutional reforms. Captured in November 1879, he told the authorities three months later that he would be willing 'to reveal the whole organization' in exchange for granting Russia a constitution and abolishing immediately the present system of repression.²² His reasons for proposing such a 'deal' were not due to self-serving motives. They sprang from the genuine belief that terrorism had ceased to be an effective and legitimate instrument of political change. If earlier he had thought that under Russian conditions terrorism was the only weapon available to revolutionary socialists, he now, after much soul-searching, concluded that political violence negated rather than furthered his most cherished ideals – a socialist party and political liberty. Terrorism, he was sure, destroyed the former and made the government too intransigent to grant the latter. Hence he hit upon his 'brilliant plan' of negotiating a 'cease-fire' with his capturers that would not only save the lives of his comrades but also secure – what *he assumed* to be their principal objectives – constitutionally guaranteed rights and liberties.

Cognizant of the purity of Goldenberg's motives, the investigating officials, assistant procurator Dobrzhinskii and Colonel Peshin of the gendarmerie, cleverly exploited his political *naïveté* by giving the appearance that they fully shared his high-minded sentiments and that, moreover, they themselves were anxious to cooperate with him to end the 'fratricidal war' between the revolutionary party and the tsarist government. Brilliantly executing their own plan to elicit an 'open testimony', they joined him in acting out a 'tragic comedy'.

Together [with Goldenberg] they drew a glowing picture of the near future when the whole life of the country would be built on the foundation of a renovated state order ... And in these conversations Dobrzhinskii ... enthralling Goldenberg

with images of a tempting beautiful future, convinced him that a constitution [would] be granted right away, if only the revolutionaries laid down their arms. And the light-minded Goldenberg, for whom, as is evident from his 'confession', all revolutionary struggle boiled down in the last analysis to the conquest of certain liberal reforms, was carried along by Dobrzhinskii, by the prospect that together with this 'reformer' [he would] reshape the life of the country.²³

The 'comedy' was played to the bitter end. As Kantor wrote, 'Goldenberg strongly believed in Dobrzhinskii and figured that with his testimony he would not harm the revolutionary movement, but bring closer the day of the constitutional paradise and save hundreds of revolutionaries from hanging and execution.'²⁴ Tragically indeed, the 'hero' hanged himself when he realized that he had been a willing victim of deception which sealed, rather than changed, the fate of many of his comrades.

In the words of one historian, Goldenberg's 'confession' gives 'the impression of not only an unbalanced personality but fantastic political naiveté'.²⁵ True enough, but it is equally, if not more, pertinent to recognize that, for all his lapses into the world of fantasy, Goldenberg's behaviour was also dictated by rational and ethical considerations. A careful analysis of his 'confession' and the circumstances leading to his suicide shows that he acted the way he did because he had lost faith in the political expediency and legitimacy of terrorism for achieving constitutional reforms – the principal goal of his own revolutionary activity in Narodnaia Volia. As he convincingly explains in his confession, he was able to tell his capturers honestly that, although he was a fervent believer in socialism – which for him was a religious experience rather than a blueprint for revolutionary action – his views regarding the present situation in Russia were purely political and aimed at nothing more than 'political rights to which the revolutionary party is committed and political equality to which the whole population of Russia aspires'.²⁶ Consequently, they should disregard his own and his party's socialism, which was irrelevant to the present conflict, and join him, Goldenberg, in trying to stop the murderous and senseless terror by terminating their own war against the revolutionaries and, instead, institute liberal reforms such as were already in place in Western Europe. For his part, he would guarantee an end to the revolutionary terror by cooperating with the government in getting hold of terrorists still at large and by persuading already imprisoned comrades to accept his plan of salvation. Needless to say, this, as Goldenberg himself acknowledged in the end, was a fantastic plan – 'a fantasy', he wrote, 'that, due only to my nervous breakdown, was taken advantage of by the prosecutors – [who] electrified me [with their deceptive talk] and aroused my fantasy to the point of hallucination'.²⁷

What has gone unnoticed in all accounts of Goldenberg is the fact that without his 'Jewish predilection' for a 'constitutional paradise' – as distinct from socialist cosmopolitan aspirations – no degree of mental sickness could have unhinged Goldenberg to commit his well-meaning 'treason'. Even when he regained his sanity in the last days before hanging himself, he persisted in the belief that the only sensible goal of revolution was constitutional government. He remained adamant that the revolutionaries must desist from any further terrorist actions, and, finally, he was hopeful that his own ill-fated venture might not have been without influence on such people like Count Loris-Melikov, who, he was sure, wanted to give Russia a constitution.²⁸

This short diversion into the ideo-political world of Jewish Narodovoltsy shows that while socialist cosmopolitanism retained its importance, the dominant motif of their thinking and behaviour was political. As *chistye konstitutsionalisty*, people like Zundeleovich, Zlatopolskii, and Goldenberg thought in terms of Western bourgeois political institutions which would ensure free elections, legal equality, and freedom of expression and assembly. The establishment of such institutions, and presumably of a regular functioning parliament rather than just the calling of a once-and-for-all Constituent Assembly, which might or might not bring about the new political order, was their principal concern. In this they were a minority whose a-Populist political conceptions carried no weight in Narodnaia Volia. For in spite of its political orientation, the party was still permeated with the 'Bakuninist belief in the socialist instincts of the popular masses, ... instincts that would reveal themselves in the event of a revolution' – a revolution that would inaugurate, above all else, the liquidation of the old social order either directly, through the destruction of the government, or, indirectly, through the socialist legislation of a Constituent Assembly.²⁹

Both Zundeleovich and Zlatopolskii knew that they were a rare breed of politically oriented socialists whose 'radical-constitutionalist' opinion had little, if any, influence on their comrades in the party's Executive Committee.³⁰ But in holding this opinion they represented many of those Jews who were attracted to Narodnaia Volia not only because it offered them a 'creative' outlet for their cosmopolitan-socialist aspirations, but also because it accommodated their more immediate preference for a Western-style constitutional government and all that this implied in terms of political and social emancipation. Thus while 'the radical-constitutionalist tendency' hardly played a role in the programmatic deliberations of Narodnaia Volia, this largely Jewish political motive was

foremost in the minds of Jews who dedicated themselves to Narodnaia Volia during its 'heroic period' in 1879–81.

It was quite natural, therefore, that with the disintegration of Chernyi Peredel in Russia and its concomitant Marxist transformation abroad after 1881, radical Jews gravitated in ever increasing numbers towards Narodnaia Volia. Its ideo-political platform of merging Populism with 'liberalism' coincided more directly with their own socialist-Jewish disposition than the 'ideal', but politically still utopian, social-democratic synthesis of former Jewish Chernoperedeltsy in the Geneva Emancipation of Labour Group. In opting for the 'political realism' of Narodnaia Volia (especially as represented by Andrei Zheliabov who had been 'recruited' by Zundeleovich to join the terrorists in 1879), they were influenced by the immediate prospect that in gaining a constitution Russia would enter the mainstream of West European political culture with the result that, as in the West, Jews, along with everybody else, would become fully integrated citizens of Russian society. This thinking did not replace the old cosmopolitan ideal of a happily united socialist humanity as a principal source of Jewish revolutionary commitment, but it was a powerful new incentive for Jews to identify themselves with the political goals of Narodnaia Volia. In short, it intensified the process of mobilizing Jews for revolutionary activity.

The previous appeal of socialist cosmopolitanism was now combined with more immediate, and apparently more practical, political considerations – considerations which were directly relevant to the disheartening experience of many young Jews who in their striving for educational and professional advancement came increasingly in conflict with the anti-Jewish policies of the tsarist regime. Thus, while in the 1870s the Jewish motif was characterized by the quasi-religious attachment of revolutionary Jews to a cosmopolitan socialist faith whose values and ideals reflected Western (German) social-democratic rather than Russian Populist preoccupations, in the 1880s this motif was matched, if not superseded, by another that was equally Western in orientation and manifested itself in the political-constitutionalist approach of Jewish Narodovoltsy. Though highly appreciative of Marxian 'scientific socialism' and German Social Democracy, the new generation of Jewish revolutionaries chose to follow the 'glorious standard' of Narodovoltsy Populism which, unlike the temporizing Marxism of the Emancipation of Labour Group, seemed to promise salvation in the foreseeable future.

9 Technicians of terrorism

In Russian revolutionary history the eventful years of 1879–81 inaugurated what is generally known as the decade of Narodnaia Volia. While Chernyi Peredel was fighting for its survival, Narodnaia Volia initiated a string of terrorist operations which culminated in the assassination of Alexander II in 1881. As an apparently invincible revolutionary force Narodnaia Volia attracted scores of radicals who otherwise might have supported Chernyi Peredel. It thereby, inadvertently, sealed the fate of Chernyi Peredel which not only had to be content with bearing the brunt of the government's all out repression of the revolutionary movement, but also lost many of its members to Narodnaia Volia which now appeared as the only viable alternative to achieve revolutionary change in Russia. Jews figured prominently among these new converts to Narodovoltsy Populism.

Jewish radicals were drawn to Narodnaia Volia because it gave priority to political objectives as a preliminary stage to socialism. Although their own notion of socialism was largely devoid of Populist characteristics, Jews were sufficiently impressed by the 'political realism' of Narodnaia Volia to join its ranks in large numbers. Indeed throughout the 1880s, this 'realism' proved to be a powerful revolutionary incentive for Jews: besides accommodating their striving for universal social and civic emancipation – the maximalist and minimalist ideals of Jewish socialists – it also answered their quest for immediate political action that would liberalize Russian society. Moreover, psychologically, Narodnaia Volia offered them the opportunity to vent their pent-up frustration by participating constructively and without delay in a revolutionary struggle that would sweep away the oppressive legal and educational limitations against themselves and Russian Jewry in general. As previously, but now on a much larger scale, they excelled in maintaining the movement's 'underground' as its proverbial 'practitioners and technicians of revolution'.¹ What follows shortly is an account of how this 'excellence' sustained Narodnaia Volia's terrorist campaign from its inception in 1879 to its culmination in 1881.

But first, let us note another important theme: official Russian antisemitism. The ever growing Jewish participation in the revolutionary movement, and its increasing visibility as Jews became more frequently linked to highly publicized acts of terrorism, was duly registered by those who had least to gain from it – the government officials. Although some noticed that there was a nexus between the radicalization of Jews and *yidishye rekhtlozikeyt*, the general feeling was that from time immemorial the ‘Hebrew race’ had been an alien and subversive element in society and that its decomposing powers had reached epidemic proportions due to the influx of Jews into Russian society via educational, professional, and commercial channels. This feeling gained in force as more and more Jewish names appeared conspicuously on the pages of government reports and newspaper articles dealing with political subversion in general and terrorist plots in particular. As will be shown in greater detail further on, this gave rise to a new antisemitic myth which attributed the revolutionary unrest of the 1880s and of the following decades to the Jewish people.

Unable, or perhaps unwilling, to comprehend the ‘Nihilist disease’ as a symptom of the government’s own inability to cope with the socio-economic problems undermining its authority, it was conveniently diagnosed as a ‘Jewish disease’ that was part and parcel of the indestructible ‘Hebrew leprosy’.² But the new myth was not just created by recycling traditional anti-Jewish prejudices. Obviously, there had to be a modicum of truth, some tangible facts, that would allow for novel antisemitic generalizations. As in the case of most mythologies, fantasy alone does not explain the origins of fanciful mental constructs. No matter how much prejudiced fantasy entered into the making of Russian political antisemitism, its ideologues were also rational human beings who relied on some sort of concrete evidence to substantiate their demagogic reasoning. In other words, both fact and prejudice induced and enabled them to contrive a rationale for explaining the ‘revolutionary cancer’.

The task ahead of us is to disentangle truth from myth, to distinguish between fact and prejudice, and to ask: how much truth was there in the assertion that Jews were at the source of the ‘nihilist disease’? What, in fact, was the Jewish role in the terrorism of Narodnaia Volia during its most volatile period of activity in 1879–81?

The conventional answer has been that Jews contributed next to nothing to the momentous surge of Populist terrorism. Commenting on the Russian government’s antisemitic rationale in blaming Jews for the assassination of Alexander II on 1 March 1881, Salo Baron stated: ‘Although the terrorists included only one Jewish woman, Gesia

Helfman, whose contribution had consisted merely in providing shelter for her fellow conspirators, officially inspired rumours were spread that Jews had played a leading part in the revolutionary upheaval.³ Aside from the fact that there is no evidence for those 'officially inspired rumours', Baron's statement is grossly misleading, both in describing Helfman's contribution and in giving the appearance that her supposedly modest role was sufficient for official opinion to hold Jews responsible for the revolutionary unrest. To tell the whole story which led to the rise of such an attitude it is best to return to late 1879, when Jewish participation in Narodnaia Volia terrorism began, and, consequently, trace the role of Jews in its various stages which led one and a half years later to the killing of the Tsar. The activity of Aron Zundeleovich offers a convenient point of entry to this chapter in the history of Jews in the revolutionary movement.

The career of Aron Zundeleovich as a Narodovolets came to an early end on 28 October 1879 when he was arrested in the St Petersburg Public Library where, ironically, he had been reading up on problems that confront centralized conspiratorial organizations. But by that time he had already rendered invaluable services to the new party. To begin with, he had been instrumental in creating its technical and material foundation through his work on behalf of Liberty or Death. Then, in August 1879, he had secured for the Narodovoltsy most of Zemlia i Volia's technical apparatus, fiscal resources, and underground facilities. In the remaining three months of his activity, he helped to consolidate Narodnaia Volia's techno-organizational infrastructure which put the party on a sound footing to wage its terrorist struggle against the government. Thus, as the party's foremost exponent of systematic terror and outstanding *praktik*, Zundeleovich perhaps more than any other Narodovolets ensured the realization of its efforts to disorganize the government by striking at the Tsar himself with the most modern means available – dynamite.

The role of Zundeleovich in utilizing dynamite for revolutionary purposes has been confirmed by several of his contemporaries. Grigorii Gurevich states that he and his comrades in the Berlin circle 'knew that Arkadii had bought dynamite from somewhere and had brought it to St Petersburg'. This, he claims, 'was the first dynamite which the revolutionaries received in Russia'. Lev Deich goes so far as to attribute to Zundeleovich alone the idea of using the newly invented explosive for terrorist objectives. 'To Zundeleovich', he writes, 'belongs the initiative to replace knives and revolvers with dynamite and bombs which, due to his efforts, began to be produced by home-made methods in Russia

itself.⁴ Though essentially true, these statements must be qualified in several respects.

In the first place, Zundeleovich did not buy dynamite in large quantities but only procured samples to enable his comrades in Russia to manufacture high-quality dynamite themselves. Secondly, Zundeleovich himself indicated that when he and others sought new, more effective weapons of terrorism, it was Sergei Kravchinskii who, upon his request, conducted experiments in the Swiss mountains to test the efficacy of dynamite and other explosives. Communicating his findings, Kravchinskii confirmed Zundeleovich's own preference for dynamite which, he told him, 'corresponds best with the targets singled out for terrorist acts'. Reassured that dynamite was the 'right stuff', Zundeleovich used his contacts in Switzerland to secure samples for the terrorists' 'laboratory' in St Petersburg.⁵ Thus, aside from promoting the introduction of dynamite into the revolutionary struggle, Zundeleovich also helped to initiate the actual home-made production of the 'elegant and slender bombs'.⁶

Of course, the 'dynamite business' was merely one of the many tasks which Zundeleovich performed in his capacity as 'chief contrabandist' and 'minister of foreign affairs'. As in the days of Zemlia i Volia much of his time was absorbed in 'keeping open' the frontier for the transmission of men and materials. Perhaps it was a fitting conclusion to his unique role in the revolutionary movement that on his last mission abroad in September 1879 he bought equipment for the newly established printing press of Narodnaia Volia and also enlisted a very capable typesetter – Leizer Tsukerman. Although the press had already been operational since August, the additional hardware supplied by Zundeleovich (more type and other printing accessories) greatly improved the quality and quantity of its output.⁷ Equally important was the arrival of Tsukerman. His professionalism and sociable personality helped to create an *esprit de corps* which was deeply appreciated by all members of Narodnaia Volia's first printing shop, the Sapernaia tipografia, located on Sapernaia street in St Petersburg.

As we know, the beginnings of Leizer Tsukerman's association with the revolutionary movement reach back to his native Mogilev where, in 1867–68, he had joined the local circle of radical maskilic youngsters. Under Akselrod's influence he discovered in socialism a *Weltanschauung* that corresponded to his emotional needs and idealistic impulses which had been set free, but not satisfied, by the literature of the Haskalah. Having found in socialism a new religion – so much so that, in the words of Lev Deich, he was '*par excellence* the representative of that class of people who abandoned [themselves] body and soul to holy

cause' – he no longer desired to acquire a secular education in one of the state Rabbinical seminaries.⁸ Like many of his Mogilev comrades he left Russia and joined the Berlin circle of Jewish 'Nihilists' in 1874.

Following the advice of his old friend Akselrod and the prompting of the Berlin circle, Tsukerman went to Vienna in 1875 to learn the trade of typesetting in the print-shop of his erstwhile mentor in Haskalah wisdom – Perets Smolenskin. This was to become his revolutionary vocation in the true sense of the word. Dedicated to excellent workmanship in the service of socialism, he left Smolenskin as soon as he had acquired the knowledge of his trade and joined Aron Liberman in publishing *Hames*. As it turned out, Liberman was unable to sustain this first experiment of issuing a Jewish socialist journal. Free to employ his talents elsewhere, Tsukerman went to Geneva in the first half of 1878 and worked for almost a year as a printer of the Russian anarchist journal *Obshchina*.⁹ It was here that Zundeleovich, appreciative of Tsukerman's personal and professional qualities, convinced him in September 1879 to join the staff of Narodnaia Volia's Sapernaia tipografia.

Tsukerman easily adjusted to his new environment and readily melted in with the group of people who operated the press. As one of them wrote later on, 'it was as if he was in his own element ... already on the next day [after his arrival] he worked on equal terms with the others'. Indeed, all considered him 'a very good printer and person' – a *nastoiashchii tipografskii rabotnik*.¹⁰ Yet, judging by what his comrades remembered most about him, it was his sociability rather than his professionalism which added immeasurably to the workings of the printing establishment.

Until the arrival of Tsukerman the group's atmosphere had been anything but cheerful. Cut off from the outside world because of conspiratorial precautions, the staff was a silent and morose company of individuals each living in their own egocentric world of likes and dislikes. Apparently, they lacked harmony and possessed none of the qualities that made for team spirit. It was a body without a soul – and it was none other than Tsukerman who implanted this life-giving spiritual ingredient. According to the 'manager' of the printing shop, Nikolai Bukh, 'this cheerful, witty, sharp-minded, lively – though in appearance sickly – Jew resuscitated our group [and] united us [through] his kind and good-natured disposition'. These words are seconded by Sofia Ivanova-Boreisha who observed that Tsukerman's 'inexhaustible goodness' and cheerful disposition transformed those around him and created an atmosphere of cooperation and togetherness which raised the work morale and spiritual well-being of all his comrades.¹¹

It was by sheer force of personality that Tsukerman, effortlessly and undeliberately, tied together people who, except for their work and revolutionary convictions, had little in common. Interestingly enough, it was his Jewishness that accounted for his ability to breathe life into this lifeless collection of individuals. For it was not as an assimilationist, a 'non-Jewish Jew', that Tsukerman gained the friendship and respect of his Gentile colleagues. On the contrary, it was as a *Jewish Jew*, as a quintessential Jewish personality, that he impressed them and won their hearts and minds. His Yiddish songs, jokes, and stories drawn from the rich repertoire of Jewish life in the Pale brought humour, informality, and joy into their midst. They may not have been able to comprehend the 'soft Yiddish humour' and Jewish wisdom of his endless anecdotes which he told them in less than perfect Russian that was often interspersed with Yiddish phrases – but they all loved it. Tsukerman was in his element. Joining Narodnaia Volia's printing shop was like a homecoming, a home where his presence made a difference, a life among people who shared his sentiments and unquestionable dedication to socialist ideals. As Ivanova-Boreisha said of him, 'he became attached with all his soul to his comrade co-workers ... Conscious of his usefulness in the workings of the press, he was fully content and evidently satisfied with his new environment.'¹²

Unfortunately, this state of affairs lasted only for a couple of months. On 18 January 1880 the Sapernaia tipografia was raided by the police who promptly arrested those present, including Tsukerman. Sentenced ten months later to eight years of hard labour in Siberia, he was unable to withstand the rigorous hardships of exile and ended his life in one of the great Siberian rivers, the Enisei, on 18 July 1887.¹³

While Tsukerman's career ended with the destruction of the Sapernaia tipografia, that of his friend Zundeleovich was even more short-lived. Arrested already in October 1879 and sentenced at the same trial as Tsukerman, he likewise was sent to forced labour in eastern Siberia. To Narodnaia Volia the loss of its 'valuable comrade Zundeleovich' would have been difficult to sustain had it not been for another Vilna Jew – Benjamin Iokhelson, an apprentice and close friend of 'David the Brave'.¹⁴

As a member of Zundeleovich's Vilna circle, Iokhelson had acquainted himself from early on with the details of smuggling and transporting 'revolutionary goods'. In the wake of the circle's destruction in 1875, he went to Berlin where he assisted Zundeleovich in shipping illegal literature to Russia. Combining this activity with his desire to return to Russia in order to fulfil his Lavrovist calling of 'educating the people', he left Berlin for the Ukraine in the early summer of 1876. Acting as

Zundeleovich's 'mailman', he delivered books, pamphlets and letters to radical circles, including the group of Hebrew socialists in Kiev who later collaborated with Liberman in publishing *Ha-emet*.

Much of his time was spent in the Ukrainian town of Kremenchug. Here he radicalized the local Jewish youth by organizing a sizeable circle of students for socialist 'self-education'. Many of its 'graduates' entered the revolutionary movement, the most notable being the later Narodovolets Aizik Borisovich Aronchik (1859–88). Justly proud of his pioneering efforts, Iokhelson took pleasure in declaring years later that 'henceforth Kremenchug became one of the revolutionary hotbeds in southern Russia'.¹⁵

The heat emanating from this hotbed was soon noticed by the police. Consequently, after only ten months, Iokhelson was forced to return once more to Berlin. After residing for another year in Berlin, his undiminished Populist convictions drove him back again to Russia. In spite of his determination to 'settle among the people' as a 'cultural worker' (*derevenshchik*), he was side-tracked by the Zemlevoltsy, particularly Zundeleovich, who wanted him to help run the underground. He soon gained the reputation of an experienced and reliable 'conspirator' who was known to manage the St Petersburg–Moscow route of communication and transportation. Although he tried to divest himself of this responsibility which kept him from his most cherished dream of becoming a *derevenshchik*, there seemed to be no escape from the specifically Jewish vocation of being a *praktik* and *tekhnik* of the revolutionary underground. By the time of Zundeleovich's arrest he was already considered an important 'agent' of the Executive Committee of Narodnaia Volia, which he had joined as an original member in August–September 1879.

Iokhelson's first assignment was to assist S. G. Shiriaev, A. V. Iakimova, and G. Isaev in the production of dynamite. When this work was completed in October 1879, Iokhelson took over the management of the party's 'passport bureau', which supplied the revolutionaries, including the Chernoperedeltsy, with all sorts of forged identity papers. The forms and data required for these documents were collected from all over Russia. For instance, while Iokhelson was still working the St Petersburg dynamite shop he went to Minsk to collect passport forms for persons of the urban estate (*meshchane*) from the Jewish Khurgin brothers, the elder of whom soon became the leader of the Minsk Narodovoltsy.¹⁶ Incidentally, the forms furnished with identification papers all those terrorists who, in October 1879, departed from St Petersburg to mine railways over which Alexander II was expected to travel a month later.

As a *passportist* Iokhelson was responsible for keeping a ready supply of a large variety of documents from which, upon request, he could issue fake identification papers 'officially' stamped and signed by him. The degree to which the safety of revolutionaries depended on this sort of work has been aptly captured by nicknaming the 'passport bureau' 'heavenly chancellery' (*nebesnaia kantseliariia*). It provided them with a life-saving legal facade behind which they were able to hide their true identity and pursue with relative impunity their illegal activities. Iokhelson proved to be a perfect 'magistrate'. In the words of his biographer, this matter 'demanded greatest conspiratorial precaution, pedantic precision in combination with audacity and ingenious resourcefulness – these were the qualities Iokhelson exhibited to the highest degree'.¹⁷

Equally important was Iokhelson's contribution in creating, together with Hesia Helfman, a 'heavenly refuge' for the Narodovoltsy operating in and out of St Petersburg. On 24 November 1879 Narodnaia Volia had lost its central conspiratorial quarters. To rectify this situation Iokhelson, Helfman, and another Jewish Narodovolka, Roza Lichkus, set out to search for a new hide-out. Within a couple of days they found a good place on Gorokhovaia Street. After furnishing the apartment, Iokhelson and Helfman moved in and began their 'respectable' life as a 'married couple', managing the party's secret headquarters until its deliberate dissolution in March 1880.¹⁸

During its four months of existence, the Gorokhovaia kvartira functioned as the Narodovoltsy's clearing house, place of assembly, and administrative centre. Describing an average day in the life of the *kvartira*, Iokhelson wrote:

In the morning around 10–11 o'clock I usually left [the apartment] with a briefcase in hand, giving the appearance of going to work. [I] returned for dinner with a variety of items bought, consisting of twenty to thirty pounds of paper for the Narodnaia Volia press, printing ink [*kraski*], bottles of nitric or sulphuric acids and other things for less peaceful purposes. Usually, Tikhomirov came by to fetch the acids which he took with much precaution to the [dynamite workshop] of Iakimova and Isaev ...

The paper was picked up by S. A. Ivanova [Boreisha]. She used to dress modestly and brought [us] unbound issues of 'Narodnaia Volia' or proclamations wrapped up in black calico. In this fashion she took with her long bundles of printing paper ...

In the evening I usually stayed at home. We [Iokhelson and Helfman] bound or put together the issues of *Narodnaia Volia* and the proclamations of the Executive Committee we had received from the press and transmitted them to representatives of circles or mailed them to specific addresses in the form of letters or small parcels.

Almost daily Aleksandr Mikhailov arrived with a ... handwritten list of persons at whose place there would be a house search during the night or in the next couple of days. We copied the names and addresses in order to warn the listed persons through various channels of communication.¹⁹

Besides these routine functions, which also included the storing and distribution of 'final products' (including dynamite), the *kvartira* served as a meeting place of the Executive Committee, in particular for its planning commission – the so-called Rasporiaditel'naia komissia. Thus, as 'managers' of the conspiratorial quarter, Iokhelson and Helfman were in charge of the nerve centre of the whole organization. It was a role which, in the judgement of their comrades, they fulfilled excellently in every respect.²⁰

If Iokhelson was the pedantically pragmatic, almost business like 'proprietor' of the *kvartira*, Hesia Helfman was its guardian angel, ensuring its safety and offering hospitality to those seeking refuge. Paying homage to her abilities as 'proprietress' of a whole string of terrorist dwellings of which Gorokhovaia was merely the first, Iokhelson remarked:

Her talent was the creation of several important conspiratorial quarters where she proved herself an extremely adroit 'proprietress'. Nobody matched her ability to get along with landlords and janitors as well as she did – to put off, as it were, uninvited visitors with smooth talk and to divert their attention from compromising objects which, it seemed, should inevitably have caught their eyes. Underneath a most unassuming, simple exterior, even talkativeness, there was hidden a remarkable presence of mind and ingenuity.²¹

In addition to her natural talent for organizing and taking care of underground establishments, Helfman was equally, if not more, admired for the moral qualities and selfless dedication she displayed in looking after the domestic affairs of conspiratorial quarters and the well-being of its visiting clientele.²²

The personality and activity of Helfman were known, and extended, beyond the confines of the Gorokhovaia *kvartira*. For her tasks included the gathering and dissemination of information that was of considerable importance for maintaining the party's high profile in St Petersburg circles sympathetic to its cause. Citing from a letter of Anna Epshtein, Sergei Kravchinskii said of her 'public relations' activity:

Hesia Helfman was known everywhere [in radical St Petersburg], and the youth spoke of her with great respect. The students had much affection and esteem for her and were always thoroughly acquainted with everything new in the revolutionary world ... Her pockets and large leather reticula, from which she never separated, were always full with proclamations of the Executive Committee, issues of *Narodnaia Volia*, tickets for lotteries, balls, concerts, and

theatrical performances, the sales of which raised funds for the support of political exiles and underground publications. Hesia's knowledge of addresses was endless, she was a walking directory, and could arrange meetings with any of the principal terrorists.²³

In this Helfman was particularly admired by the radical students with whom, according to other sources, she was in almost daily contact. To them Hesia was a vital link to a highly secretive party whose ideals and heroes came alive precisely through her. Their idealized image of Narodnaia Volia was largely a projection of her personality and intimate knowledge of its activities.²⁴

In the spring of 1880 the Gorokhovaia kvartira was dissolved for security reason. Helfman's managerial talents were used for other similar quarters. Likewise, Iokhelson continued carrying out special tasks for the Executive Committee. In the summer he was sent abroad to serve as Narodnaia Volia's 'foreign agent'.²⁵ He did not return until 1885 when he left Switzerland with the intention to resuscitate the nearly paralyzed Narodnaia Volia at home. In the meantime he had also managed the party's printing press in Geneva, editing its two journals, *Vestnik narodnoi voli* and *Kalendar narodnoi voli*. But when he embarked on his last mission, fortune was not on his side. On crossing the Russian frontier, the old expert at illegal border crossings was arrested. The circumstances were symptomatic of the debilitated state of the revolutionary movement. While still in Geneva, he had been closely shadowed by an *agent-provocateur* who promptly informed the Okhrana of his plans. He was fated to languish for two years in prison, followed by ten years of Siberian exile.²⁶

The role of Iokhelson, Zundeleovich, Tsukerman, and Helfman in manning Narodnaia Volia's underground does not, of course, exhaust the Jewish contribution to the functioning of its techno-organizational infrastructure during 1879–81. Other outstanding activists in this respect were Grigorii Mikhailovich Fridenson (1854–1913), Aizik Aronchik, Grigorii Goldenberg, and the Zlatopolskii brothers, Savelii and Lev.²⁷ The latter two participated in preparations to blow up the Tsar. Savelii assisted Vera Figner in planning the November 1879 attempt to mine railroad tracks in Odessa. Lev, who had a reputation for 'extraordinary mathematical talent' and 'inventive technical originality', applied his theoretical know-how to the second Odessa mining in April–May 1880. Fittingly known by his nickname *Mekhanik*, he not only advised Sofia Perovskaia (who was in charge of the assassination team) on how to tunnel and mine a major Odessa thoroughfare, but also participated directly in building the subterranean explosive device.²⁸ But these

activities were minor compared to the brothers' other achievements. Saveli's Odessa role, both as an assistant to Figner and skilful activist in local circles, was merely a prelude to his subsequent career as a highly valued *praktik* whose organizational and conspiratorial abilities soon earned him a prominent place on the Executive Committee.²⁹ As for Lev Zlatopolskii, neither time nor personal aptitude allowed him to match his younger brother's status as a 'famous revolutionary Jew'. Yet, in a less conspicuous manner, he made his own, uniquely technical, contribution to the party's security and operational potential: he invented a secret code of communication which enabled the Narodovoltsy to circulate information quite freely without the risk of detection. However, his inventive genius was soon lost to Narodnaia Volia. Arrested on 2 January 1881, he was put on trial a year later with nineteen other Narodovoltsy, and sentenced to twenty years of hard labour in Siberian mines.³⁰

The defendants in the so-called 'Trial of the Twenty' included Grigorii Fridenson and Aizik Aronchik. Both had been principal 'agents' of the Executive Committee. The little information there is on Fridenson indicates that he had served his revolutionary apprenticeship with Zemlia i Volia and, in 1879–80, became a very reliable 'functionary' of Narodnaia Volia's Moscow organization. During this time he executed numerous assignments in close cooperation with such leading lights of the party as Aleksandr Mikhailov and Andrei Zheliabov. In 1880 he joined the 'central staff' in St Petersburg. But his career was cut short in January 1881 when, like Lev Zlatopolskii, he fell victim to a massive police round-up which netted many other Narodovoltsy as well.³¹

Two months later the same fate befell Aizik Aronchik. Unlike Fridenson, who 'got away' with ten years of hard labour, Aronchik was made to suffer for all the terrorist sins of Narodnaia Volia by virtue of his direct participation in the November 1879 assassination attempt against Alexander II. Sentenced at first to life-long Siberian exile and hard labour, the son of the vanished Tsar, Alexander III, ordered his imprisonment in the Peter and Paul Fortress and later insisted on his transfer to the notorious Shlösselburg prison – and this in spite of the fact that Aronchik was already mentally and physically sick. Going completely insane in 1885, death finally released him from his suffering three years later.³²

Besides simple revenge, the severe punishment of Aronchik was probably due to his unambiguous commitment to political terrorism, to which he had sold his soul since the days of Liberty or Death. Never a Populist in the true sense of the word and oblivious to the niceties of socialist dogma, he had joined the terrorist enterprise because of its immediate political-constitutional goals. A man of action – courageous

and energetic in everything he did – he contributed his own modest share to the formation of Narodnaia Volia. Subsequently, he proved to be a valuable *praktik* of its underground operations – so much so that the Executive Committee appointed him as its ‘agent’ responsible for the transport and distribution of illegal literature throughout European Russia. However, his greatest crime in the eyes of the authorities was his participation in the Moscow railroad explosion of 19 November 1879.

This attempt was part of Narodnaia Volia’s first systematic, though unsuccessful, assassination project against the Tsar. Three Jews were directly involved: Savelii Zlatopolskii, Grigorii Goldenberg and, of course, Aronchik. The project was designed to kill Alexander II on his return trip by rail from the Crimea to St Petersburg by mining the tracks at three different locations: near Odessa, Alexandrovsk, and Moscow. According to this plan, Aronchik and Goldenberg were attached to the Moscow group, while Zlatopolskii, as noted already, was active in Odessa. Together with the Narodovolka Galina Cherniavskaia, Aronchik was the *khoziain* of the Moscow conspiratorial quarter which served as a storage place for the mining equipment and explosives – and as a possible hide-out for the team in case of unforeseen complications. In addition, he also took part in the physically arduous work of digging a long tunnel to place the mines beneath the tracks.

Like Aronchik and almost everyone else on the Moscow team, Goldenberg helped in the tunnelling as well. More significant, however, was his task of ferrying dynamite from the St Petersburg workshop to its various destinations and, as plans changed, shifting some of it from Odessa to Moscow. The latter turned out to be his last service to the party. For on his way back to Moscow, on 14 November, Goldenberg’s unusually heavy briefcase containing 17 kilograms of dynamite aroused the suspicion of a porter at the Elizavetgrad train station. He reported his handling of the suspicious luggage to the railroad authorities, and Goldenberg was promptly seized by the police. Interrogated on the spot, he remained tight-lipped for the time being and thus allowed the elaborate operation to run its course, leading several days later to the stunning Moscow explosion in which the Tsar narrowly escaped injury.³³

For Goldenberg, obviously, this first large-scale terrorist venture spelled the end of his revolutionary career. What followed was imprisonment, treason, and suicide. For Narodnaia Volia its failure acted as a stimulus to step up the ‘hunt for the Tsar’. Surprisingly enough, Goldenberg’s ‘open testimony’ did much less damage than has been generally assumed.³⁴ Due to the time-lag of several months between his arrest and confession, the Narodovoltsy were able to neutralize the potentially devastating effects of Goldenberg’s revelations, relayed to

them in time by Kletochnikov, their counter-agent in the Gendarmerie's Third Department. While Goldenberg sealed the fate of some people, including his own, Narodnaia Volia thus survived his 'treason' intact and, in fact, entered its 'glorious' phase which culminated in the assassination of Alexander II on 1 March 1881.

This momentous event, the final result of two years of systematic terrorist activity that witnessed Jewish participation in almost all its facets, calls for an assessment of the role of Jews in a party committed to regicide. Among the six tsaricides sentenced to execution by hanging there was only one Jew, Hesia Helfman. Identifying herself in court as a native of Mozyr, Minsk province, and Jewish by faith, she admitted belonging to Narodnaia Volia and being guilty of maintaining the conspiratorial quarter used for organizing the assassination. In the course of the trial she made it clear that while she did not condone terrorism *per se*, she had deliberately joined Narodnaia Volia because its political and social goals conformed to her own socialist ideals and values. The prosecution was not impressed by this profession of faith and her fine, legally relevant, distinction between direct and indirect participation in the crime. As far as the authorities were concerned, the case was clear cut: she deserved to be hanged because in her capacity as *khoziaika* she had greatly assisted the terrorists' murder of Alexander II.³⁵ Although exceedingly harsh in its deathly judgement, by and large this was an accurate assessment of her responsibility in perpetrating the crime.

As Narodnaia Volia's most reliable and capable keeper of conspiratorial quarters, Helfman had been in charge of managing the operational base for the 1 March attempt. From September 1880 to February 1881 she was the proprietress of the Troitskaia kvartira which, after having served for several months as an underground printing establishment, was transformed into a dynamite workshop for producing explosives that were used on 1 March. At the end of February, the material was transferred to the Telezhnaia kvartira, the actual headquarters of the whole operation, management of which was again entrusted to Helfman. Here, in the last days of February, the bombs were readied for action and distributed to the assassins. As R. M. Kantor wrote, it was therefore in 'the preparation and speedy execution of this terrorist act... that Helfman made a vital contribution within her unique sphere of competence'.³⁶ This was also the opinion of tsarist officials. In the words of General N. I. Shebeko, the author of a rather impressive survey on the gendarmerie's fight against revolutionary subversion, Helfman 'proved to be of enormous service to the leaders of the conspiracy owing to her rigorous execution of secondary, though very important, duties which had been entrusted to her'. Enjoying the benefit of hindsight, he was also

able to observe what had escaped the prosecution's scrutiny: namely, that Helfman not only performed an important function in the 1 March conspiracy, but that throughout 1879–81 she had managed several conspiratorial quarters, conducted propaganda among students and workers, distributed revolutionary literature, some of which was printed with her help, and raised funds for political prisoners in her capacity as Narodnaia Volia's representative of the revolutionary 'Red Cross'.³⁷

But even without this additional evidence, Helfman was doomed to die. Expecting a child by her common law husband, the Narodovolets N. N. Kolodkevich, her execution was at first postponed by forty days and later – due to world-wide indignation – commuted to life-long exile. None of this made a difference in the end. Physically weakened by the delivery, terribly depressed by being deprived of her baby, and apparently maltreated by prison medical personnel, she died on 2 February 1882.³⁸

The role and fate of Hesia Helfman reflects that of other Jewish Narodovoltsy as well: Aronchik died in Shlüsseldorf, as did Savellii Zlatopolskii who died of consumption, Goldenberg committed suicide in the Peter and Paul Fortress, Tsukerman drowned himself, and a host of lesser known Jews faced the gallows. The more lucky ones, though by no means less active, paid for their terrorist commitment with long years of prison and Siberian exile. Did their punishment correspond to their actual role in perpetrating terrorism during Narodnaia Volia's most active period between 1879 and 1881? Legally, it seems that their sentences were excessively harsh, if not in fact unjust. With the exception of Goldenberg and, as we shall see, Ippolit Mlodetskii, none of them took part directly in terrorist attacks. Even Zundeleovich, the most explicit advocate of this sort of struggle, never participated physically in any assassination attempt. As Shebeko rightly noted in the case of Helfman, their role in terrorism was essentially that of performing inconspicuous, secondary techno-organizational tasks. Nonetheless these tasks were vital to the machinery of political violence – and in this sense they, in fact, contributed as much to, and thus bore as much responsibility in, the execution of terrorist acts as the assassins themselves. They fulfilled a necessary function in the workings of terrorism without which its objectives could not have been pursued systematically and, ultimately, successfully. In this respect they were, as Kravchinskii wrote in his *Underground Russia* with reference to Helfman, the 'unknown heroines', the 'obscure toilers' without whom 'the party could not exist [and] the very struggle would have become impossible'.³⁹ While they were not alone in assuming this vital role, nor perhaps indispensable for it, activists like Aronchik, Helfman, and the Zlatopolskii brothers made a

substantial contribution to the 'hidden mechanics' of Narodnaia Volia's terrorist exploits.

It would be misleading, however, to describe the Jewish role in Narodnaia Volia merely in terms of 'secondary functions', and to claim moreover, as Tscherikower has done, that this role was a modest one (*a besheydene*) since Jews were 'located basically between the leaders of the party and the direct perpetrators of terrorist acts'. 'The strength of the Jewish revolutionary', he argues, 'lay altogether in different spheres: he was a pioneer of party-building, a great practitioner and technician of revolution.'⁴⁰ Much of this is true of course. But, as such, his role was neither 'modest' nor always 'secondary'. As intermediaries between the party's Executive Committee and its rank and file, the Jewish Narodovoltsy occupied an important position in the propagation and organization of political terrorism. Indicative of their high profile in Narodnaia Volia is also the fact that they were well represented in the higher echelons of the party. Of the thirty-one members of the Executive Committee prior to 1 March 1881, two (or perhaps even three, that is, Zundeleovich, Zlatopolskii, and Tellalov) were Jewish. Equally prominent was their share in the second highest rank of the party hierarchy. In Helfman, Iokhelson, Fridenson, and Aronchik they supplied four, or about 16 per cent of the Committee's 'principal agents'. Perhaps Goldenberg should also be added to this latter category, although his status has never been satisfactorily explained.⁴¹ Evidently, he and all the other Jews who were associated with the Executive Committee were also closely linked with the leading councils of the party. In this relationship they fulfilled not only an intermediary technical function between the leadership and the terrorists in the field, but were themselves active and, at times, influential members of the former. Actually, only Leizer Tsukerman and Lev Zlatopolskii fit the type of Jewish Narodovolets who, in Tscherikower's opinion, played a 'modest technical role'. As for the others, they were indeed 'great practitioners and technicians' of the revolutionary underground whose role however extended far beyond mere secondary functions in the perpetration of Narodnaia Volia's terrorism.

Though highly prejudiced in its assertion that Jews, along with Poles, were the mainspring of the revolution, the tsarist government obviously had a case in blaming 'Jewish nihilists' for the wave of terrorism that had rocked the ship of state since 1878-79 and even claimed its captain in 1881. In some ways, and in spite of their exaggerations, its officials had a more accurate appreciation of the role of Jews in the terrorist movement than the revolutionaries themselves or historians who joined them in

down-playing the Jewish contribution. Unfortunately, the facts of this contribution were readily absorbed into an already existing framework of traditional anti-Jewish prejudices. This, in turn, produced a new strain of antisemitism that had terrible consequences for the Jews of Russia. However, the alchemy of mixing fact and prejudice had already begun in the early 1870s before it yielded a convenient product for popular consumption in the aftermath of Alexander II's assassination.

The making of this new antisemitism was correctly identified by the Soviet Jewish historian Iurii Gessen when he wrote that 'the 1870s gave rise to a new motif – the Jews are harmful and dangerous [due] to their political revolutionary activity'.⁴² If previously they were considered harmful for the economic and moral well-being of society because of their 'exploitation' of the native population and their religious 'fanaticism' which offended Christian sensibilities, they now assumed also the reputation of being a politically subversive element. An early manifestation of this novel attitude is already familiar to us. It surfaced in 1872 when, following the arrest of Arkadii Finkelshtein, the governor of Vilna province told an assembly of Jewish notables: 'To all the other good qualities which you Jews possess, about the only thing you need is to become nihilists too.' Three years later, the Vilna chief of police was more explicit. In connection with the June 1875 destruction of the first Vilna circle, he declared: 'Until now we considered you Jews only swindlers; now we will consider you also rebels.'⁴³ Still these officials did not yet attribute any political significance to the presence of 'Jewish Nihilists' in the Russian revolutionary movement. Ironically, their antisemitic prejudices – clearly evident in characterizing the Vilna radicals as 'bragging' Jewish students who were 'unaccustomed to physical work' – led them to believe that among 'all the persons' implicated in the 1875–76 Vilna case, which included Zundeleovich and Iokhelson, 'there is not one from whom a dangerous influence on society could be expected'.⁴⁴ But this shortcoming in the elaboration of a new antisemitic motif that perceived Jews not only as 'rebels' but also as a principal source of revolutionary subversion was overcome in the following years.

The bare facts required to make the linkage between Jews and revolution were already forthcoming in 1877. Analysing the data of 1,611 people arrested between 1873 and 1877 for political subversion, a police official of the Third Department discovered that 6.5 per cent of the most serious offenders were Jews. Interpreting his findings, he arrived at the disturbing conclusion that the Jewish youth is 'highly susceptible to revolutionary fermentation'.⁴⁵ This assessment was confirmed three years later by another official who surveyed the 'revolutionary fermentation' in Vilna between 1878 and 1880. Asserting as 'irrefutable

fact' that Jews rather than Poles and Russians 'adhered to social-revolutionary ideals', the rapporteur emphasized the highly sophisticated activities of Jewish radicals which allowed them to prepare the youth systematically for political subversion, while simultaneously maintaining close links with the revolutionary movement in major Russian cities.⁴⁶ Similar reports issued from Minsk where, during the same period, the authorities uncovered numerous traces of socialist propaganda promulgated primarily by Jews who had been active since 1876 and who were apparently well connected to circles in Warsaw, Kiev, and St Petersburg.⁴⁷ In this connection, Minsk officials expressed their opposition to unrestricted education for Jews because of widespread 'Jewish sedition' in local schools. They buttressed their argument by telling the Ministry of Education that in Minsk 'there are, more and more often, repeated cases of Jewish youth participating in secret, anti-government oriented, circles [which promote] the harmful ideas of socialism that are inherently alien to the Russian order of things'.⁴⁸ Thus, the notion that Jews had a special predilection for revolution, and that in this they occupied a special role in the movement, was firmly established in the second half of the 1870s. It was only a short step towards blaming the proliferation of alien ideas on an 'alien people'. What was still missing was a more visible, highly publicized, Jewish presence in the revolutionary movement. Terrorism, more than anything else, supplied the evidence for this.

From early on Jews were suspected of playing sinister roles in Populist terrorism. There was Maidanskii's and Rozenfeld's complicity in the gruesome mutilation of Gorinovich in 1876. Known as well was Deich's participation in the crime, which was graphically described to the authorities by Goldenberg.⁴⁹ Of course, Goldenberg himself was a perfect, and timely, example for demonstrating the supposed truth that behind every terrorist plot there was a Jew. Here was a Jewish terrorist *par excellence* who had not only assassinated the Governor General of Kharkov, but who had advised others to kill the Tsar – a task, moreover, which he desired to execute himself. In addition, his written testimony was full of Jewish names implicating Jews like Aronchik and Zundeleovich in terrorist activities. In the light of the previous arrest of Vittenberg and Jewish associates of his circle, including Gobet, all this merely confirmed the government's suspicion that Jews were principal agents of terrorism. Add to this the strongly held belief about 'the complete unity and solidarity of Jews' and the implicit, but fallacious, argument that the Jewish community was responsible for the acts of Jewish terrorists because its leaders willingly, if not purposefully, failed to exercise their authority over Jews who conspired against the state⁵⁰ – and the novel

myth of a Jewish revolutionary conspiracy against 'Holy Russia' was readily available as a new weapon in the arsenal of Russian antisemitism.

While it is not possible to pinpoint exactly the time when the mania of pervasive Jewish revolutionary conspiracy gained a foothold in Russian society and began to influence official policy against Jews, or more specifically against Jewish revolutionaries, there are indications that this occurred in 1880.⁵¹ For instance, in May 1880 Isaak Gurvich, a Minsk Chernoperedeles imprisoned in St Petersburg, was told by a penitentiary official that he should not expect to be released because Jews were considered particularly subversive.⁵² Another indication that some Jews were singled out for excessively harsh punishment is the well-known case of Iosif Isaakovich Rozovskii, a twenty-year-old Jewish university student who together with a Ukrainian comrade had been arrested in Kiev in December 1879 for distributing *Narodnaia Volia* proclamations. For this minor offence both were sentenced to death. Only Rozovskii was hanged, however. His companion's sentence was commuted to six years of hard labour. In the absence of any official explanation for this discrepancy, it is hard to escape the impression that Rozovskii was perhaps the first Jew who fell victim to the intrusion of antisemitic sentiment in the prosecution of 'political criminals'.⁵³

On 22 February 1880 another Jew, Ippolit Osipovich Mlodetskii (1856–80), was publicly executed in St Petersburg for attempting to assassinate Count Loris-Melikov, the newly appointed 'crisis manager' of the empire. Although antisemitic motives seem to have played no role in this case, it occasioned an unprecedented display of antisemitic rhetoric in the Russian conservative press. The huge crowd of some 40,000 spectators who watched Mlodetskii's spectacular execution knew of course that the 'criminal' was a Jew, and those who did not know yet that he was merely a manifestation of a general Jewish conspiracy were enlightened by reading in the pages of *Novoe vremia* that 'these Jews, being from time immemorial the representatives of the revolutionary spirit, stand now at the head of Russian Nihilists'.⁵⁴

The manner in which Mlodetskii was exploited antisemitically was duly reported by the St Petersburg correspondent of the London *Times*, who wrote:

The sheer fact that the would-be assassin, Mlodecki [sic], was of Jewish descent has sufficed to renew in certain circles of the community and in some public organs, more specifically those circulating among the lower orders of the people, the old war-cry of persecution against the Jews in general... [Any] one listening to the flood of invective which is being poured forth against the Hebrews must imagine the evil days to have returned when hatred of the Jews was prevalent in respectable society.⁵⁵

A year later Russian Jews did indeed experience the return of those 'evil days' in the form of pogroms, which in 'certain circles' were greeted as the people's rightful vengeance against Jewish exploitation and complicity in the murder of the 'little father' – Alexander II.

The circle had come to a close. In the course of one decade, fact and prejudice had created a new powerful myth: the Jews were responsible for the 'nihilist disease' which climaxed in the assassination of Alexander II. Although most tsarist officials, including the successor to the throne, Alexander III, were aware that the tsaricide could not be blamed on the Jews, at least not directly, they did nothing to defuse the destructive passions of the new antisemitism. As in the case of any myth, it mattered little that only one Jew, or rather Jewess, was among the *pervomartovtsy*. Of relevance was only that there were Jewish terrorists, and that in the person of Hesia Helfman, Jews had participated in the murderous act of March First. For people steeped in antisemitic prejudices, this was sufficient to direct their general socio-economic frustrations against the Jews: a target singled out by the press as the source of all evil – a target, moreover, that was considered a legitimate object of revenge. For there was no lack of rumours that the new Tsar himself had ordered 'the people' to avenge the 'Jewish crime' against his predecessor. Hence the numerous official reports from the pogrom-ridden provinces indicating that the unrest must be blamed on 'the evil event of March 1'. As the Governor-General of Volynia province explained: 'at the basis of the present disorders lies the deep hatred of the local population against [economic] enslavement by Jews. But this is undoubtedly exploited by ill-intentioned people, many [of whom] are fuelling the rage by their conviction that they are avenging the Tsar who was killed by the Jews.'⁵⁶ Since the government itself had no hand in circulating rumours instigating revenge-motivated pogroms, it was at first disposed to see in them the 'sinister hand of revolution'. Ignoring the fact that its own laws and policies (injurious to peasants and Jews alike) were at the core of the unrest, it readily concluded that socialist agitators deviously misled the people into anti-Jewish riots in order to destabilize the new government of Alexander III. In the mind of some tsarist officials, especially the newly appointed Minister of Internal Affairs, N. P. Ignatiev, there was now but one common denominator which explained everything – the Jews: 'Judaism was the natural breeding ground of subversion.' It propagated radical Jews who, along with Poles, were 'the basis for the nihilists' secret organization' which incited the people to attack their Jewish tormentors in a disorderly, antigovernment fashion.⁵⁷ Therefore, in the last analysis, Jews could blame themselves for the pogroms, which

they had caused directly and indirectly as revolutionaries and exploiters of the peasantry.

Ironically, while Ignatiev was forced in time to retract his claim that the *pogromshchiki* 'unwittingly act[ed] according to the designs of the revolutionaries',⁵⁸ the notion that the revolutionary movement instigated and/or encouraged the pogroms, both in word and deed, has survived in the literature dealing with these tragic events. Whatever the truth of this assertion, which will be scrutinized in chapter 10, let us emphasize already here that the anti-Jewish riots caused as much, if not more, consternation, disorientation, and soul-searching among revolutionaries as it did in government circles. Indeed, the pogroms created a veritable crisis in the ranks of Narodnaia Volia and Chernyi Peredel: a crisis which not only changed revolutionary attitudes towards popular antisemitic violence, but also profoundly strengthened the principal motives of Jewish participation in the revolutionary movement.

10 The pogroms of 1881–1882

The Jewish response to the pogroms of the early 1880s has been of great interest to historians concerned with the rise of modern Jewish national consciousness and its politico-cultural expression, Zionism. To some this response was akin to a 'revolution', to a sharp break with previous assimilationist tendencies, which 'necessarily undermined the authority of groups most clearly identified with Jewish adaptation to Russian life': the *maskilim* grouping around Baron Ginzburg's Society for the Promotion of Culture among Jews; and the socialist Jews, who themselves underwent a deep spiritual crisis that affected their commitment to the revolutionary cause of Russian Populism.¹ Others, while recognizing the momentous impact of the pogroms on Russian Jewry, have cautioned us not to overemphasize the political and psychological effects of the crisis since for many Jews this did not result in 'a complete rejection of assimilation and cosmopolitan radicalism and a wholehearted return to the Jewish masses and Jewish nationalism'.² Historians of either viewpoint agree, however, that the loss or retention of 'faith in socialist cosmopolitanism' was a crucial factor in deciding whether or not a Jewish Populist remained loyal to the Russian revolutionary movement.

This faith, so the argument continues, had been seriously challenged by the massive anti-Jewish riots of the *narod* and even more so by 'the fact that two major revolutionary parties showed clear signs of sympathy with the pogroms'.³ In other words, popular antisemitism and corresponding sentiments in the principal revolutionary groupings of Russian Populism – Narodnaia Volia and Chernyi Peredel – compelled Jewish socialists to reconsider their allegiance to revolutionary Populism. For these parties had dismally failed to live up to their 'professed internationalism' in the face of brutal anti-Jewish persecution. Thus, according to conventional interpretations, antisemitism – particularly among Gentile revolutionaries – undermined a Jewish socialist's cosmopolitan *Weltanschauung* and forced him either to renounce his Russian-centred revolutionary convictions or, paradoxically, confirm them anew in time-honoured 'cosmopolitan-assimilationist' fashion.

That renunciation rather than reconfirmation of the 'faith' was the prevalent reaction of Jewish radicals is the predominant opinion and has been most succinctly expressed by Louis Greenberg when he wrote: 'Most of the Jewish Narodniki were stunned by the open antisemitism revealed in the ranks of their Russian comrades, a sentiment directed even against the Jewish socialists. Because of this hostility Jewish revolutionaries left the ranks of the Narodniki, some even joining the newly formed Zionist groups.'⁴ Clearly, for Greenberg 'revolutionary antisemitism' was the decisive variable in the set of circumstances which drove many, if not most, Jews to abandon the revolutionary movement. Like its antidote, 'socialist cosmopolitanism', it has been accepted as an axiomatic truth in analysing the Jewish response to the pogrom crises.

While the above seems to be a neat interpretation – particularly within the context of Jewish national awakening in the form of early Zionism – it does not always square with the facts, nor does it always make sense conceptually. Factually, there is no proof that the majority of Jewish socialists 'deserted' the revolution and that they reacted in a uniformly negative way to the pogroms. As will be shown, the assertion of a negative attitude was in many cases a gradual process that did not exclude indifference to, or even approval of, the riots; nor did the eventual opposition to the pogroms result in a large-scale withdrawal from the Russian revolutionary movement. Although it is impossible to verify precisely how many Jews left the movement, we do know for certain that the vast majority of Jewish Narodovoltsy and Chernoperedeltsy remained 'loyal' to their respective parties – a loyalty that was augmented by hundreds of other Jews who embraced the revolutionary cause in the years following the pogroms. Conceptually, this fact – as well as the fact that some Jews did 'desert' the movement – cannot be explained satisfactorily in terms of 'revolutionary antisemitism' and 'socialist cosmopolitanism'. For this would mean that sometimes the latter sustained a Jew's loyalty in his hour of doubt and soul-searching, and sometimes the former destroyed his belief in the revolutionary movement's 'professed internationalism'.

The question here is, can we have it both ways? Are we to assume that the 'loyalists' were assimilated 'non-Jewish Jews' who themselves shared the antisemitic sentiments of their Gentile comrades, and that the 'deserters' were unassimilated 'Jewish Jews' whose cosmopolitan affliction was cured with the advent of 'revolutionary antisemitism'? If so, how are we to explain that most Jews, including the 'loyalist' majority, reacted in the course of time negatively to the pogroms and to pro-pogrom manifestations in the ranks of their Gentile comrades? Obviously, something is amiss with the cosmopolitan-antisemitic para-

digm. Since 'faith in socialist cosmopolitanism' was indeed a principal motif among Jewish radicals, it would seem that the other variable of the equation – 'revolutionary antisemitism' – is both insufficient and problematic for analysing Jewish, as well as Gentile, behaviour during the pogrom crises: insufficient because it does not, except through tautological argument (once a cosmopolitan, always a cosmopolitan), explain the continuous revolutionary dedication of most Jews; problematic because it applies the antisemitic brush to the revolutionary movement as a whole, including its unrepentant Jewish participants. Hence, in the first place, is it correct to characterize the revolutionary response to the pogroms in terms of antisemitism and, secondly, is it convincing to consider the 'cosmopolitan tautology' a satisfactory explanation for the persistent 'revolutionary loyalty' of Jewish socialists? These are the questions that will be addressed in the following pages in an attempt to arrive at a proper assessment of the true nature of the Russian and Jewish socialist reaction to the violent anti-Jewish riots in 1881–82.⁵

The outbreak of massive anti-Jewish riots in southern Russia came as a surprise to Jewish and Gentile revolutionaries alike. Bewilderment and disorientation marked their initial reaction. At the most they sensed some kind of an 'inner connection' to the Tsar's assassination on 1 March 1881.⁶ However, they soon convinced themselves that this was in fact a *positive connection* linked directly to their own revolutionary expectations. The dust had hardly settled over the first pogroms in Elizavetgrad, Kiev, and other places in the spring of 1881 when many began to herald the *pogromshchiki* as the vanguard of revolution, as the *enfants terribles* of a spontaneous, popular fury against the oppressive order of autocratic Russia. For them this appeared as the beginning of that revolutionary upheaval which they had dreamt of for years, and especially expected since the murder of Alexander II. Finally, 'the people' had awoken! No longer clamouring for a tsarist 'golden charter', they had taken things into their own hands: this was *buntarstvo*, the great rebellion; this was the making of a cataclysmic revolution. True, so far the *narod* had attacked only the Jews, that stratum of 'oppressors' least capable of defending itself – the 'weakest link', as it were, in the overall system of oppression. But, as far as they were concerned, there were already numerous signs – pogrom-related attacks on landlords, police, and other officials – to show that in time the riots would lose their anti-Jewish focus and reach out to those who stood behind the Jews, the gentry and the government. Thus, the task of the revolutionaries was to speed up this process towards a general conflagration by directing the enraged masses away from the Jews against the established order and its

true representatives: the Tsar and his officials, the indigenous bourgeoisie and landed aristocracy. *Summa summarum*, this was the so-called 'antisemitic' pro-pogrom attitude of revolutionary Populists.

The 'place of honour' in proving the supposedly antisemitic character of revolutionary sympathy with the *pogromshchiki* has been reserved for Gerasim Romanenko who, in August 1881, issued an extremely pro-pogrom proclamation, 'To the Ukrainian People', which is said to have represented the 'official position' of Narodnaia Volia.⁷ For, as will be elaborated later on, this document bore not only the official imprint of the Executive Committee, but its blatantly anti-Jewish statements were justified by Romanenko in the October issue of the party's official journal, *Narodnaia Volia*. His views, the argument runs, must have been shared by the party since it had apparently sanctioned the printing of the infamous proclamation – and since the document was filled with antisemitic clichés, 'the most influential factor shaping the attitude of the Narodniki toward the pogroms was outright traditional antisemitism'.⁸ According to serious scholarly opinion, there was nothing exceptional or surprising about this antisemitic motive. It had existed in revolutionary circles throughout the 1870s. The pogroms merely brought to the surface such dormant sentiments. The Romanenko proclamation and other less explicitly pro-pogrom statements were seen as 'wholly consistent' with this underlying, long-established antisemitic current in the Populist movement. For Elias Tscherikower this is also demonstrated by 'the well-known fact' that in contrast to their Gentile counterparts, Jewish socialists reacted wholly negatively to the pogroms: since their ideology and revolutionary conviction were similar, antisemitism evidently accounts for their difference in attitude.⁹

Contrary to the 'official opinion' of respected historians, a close friend and personal assistant of Pavel Akselrod, V. S. Voitinskii, wrote in 1924 that the positive pro-pogrom response

had nothing in common with antisemitism however: to the majority of revolutionaries the pogroms appeared not as a manifestation of national hostility, not as an attack against people of a certain nationality, but as a broad popular social movement, as a revolt of the impoverished masses against oppressive exploiters that must be followed by other outbursts culminating in a social revolution.¹⁰

If we accept this proposition, as I do, one is nonetheless forced to ask: how valid was this perception and expectation of the average revolutionary? Was it not, after all, rooted in antisemitic sentiments which, as many have argued, enabled them to persist in their wishful thinking, shameless Machiavellianism, and apocalyptic Bakunism?

Leaving aside the question of morality and insensitivity to human

suffering (likely to be ignored by the people thinking abstractly of achieving the salvation of mankind), it is only fair and prudent for historians to recognize that the Populists were children of their time and, like anyone else, subject to contemporary prejudices in assessing the pogroms. Thus, it comes as no surprise that, while cognizant of 'honest' and 'poor' Jews, they usually fell in with the popular stereotyping of Jews as exploiters, swindlers, and usurers – in short, the Jew as the *zhid* who was the curse of the peasantry, their idealized revolutionary clientele. Like any prejudice, this belief had some substance in fact, as was particularly visible in this case. One did not have to be an antisemite to lament the socio-economic profile and status of nineteenth-century Russian Jewry. Even the *maskilim*, and later on the Zionists, were not immune to the negative images Jews had assumed in the public mind as a consequence of the lop-sided Jewish occupational structure. That this fact was generalized and amplified to the point where it lost all resemblance to truth did not, unfortunately, occur to most Russian socialists.

Instead of coming to terms with popular misconceptions of Jewish exploitation, they uncritically accepted the negative public image of Jewry and conveniently convinced themselves that the pogroms were directed against Jews as a parasitic class rather than as an ethno-religious entity. But, with the possible exception of Romanenko, there is no evidence that this rationalization and the prejudicial conceptions which fed into it were antisemitically motivated. This was also recognized by Leo Motzkin, an outspoken Zionist critic of revolutionary complicity in the pogroms, who stated in his well-researched report, *Die Judenpogrome in Russland*, that 'regardless of how one may describe the revolutionaries' role in the pogroms, it certainly did not emanate organically from antisemitic principles or sentiments'.¹¹

This exonerating statement still begs for an answer to the question: what prevented the Russian Populists from seeing the pogroms for what they really were – Judeophobic mob violence which harmed the Jewish poor and whose 'cheer-leaders' were reactionary monarchist elements? Anti-Jewish prejudices undoubtedly contributed to this blindness. But the full answer must be sought elsewhere: namely, in their emotional and ideological make-up which was rooted in idealization of the *narod* and the expectation of a revolutionary upheaval.

The assassination of Alexander II had not yielded any political dividends. Instead of gaining a constitution or igniting a revolution, this act of terrorism destroyed Narodnaia Volia organizationally and isolated it more than ever from 'the people'. A bleak and hopeless future indeed. Short of a miracle, the Narodovoltsy faced a dead-end avenue – in short,

political bankruptcy. It must have appeared to many like a miracle when the *pogromshchiki* 'rescued' them from their predicament. In their desperation it was easy enough for them 'to read an apocalyptic meaning into the pogroms'.¹² Imbued with the Bakuninist romanticism of the peasants' volatile communistic instincts, they did not have to be antisemites to perceive the riots as an authentic expression of popular revolutionary will – of *buntarstvo*. Add to this the old, quintessential Populist notion that the revolutionary activist ought to identify himself with the aspirations of the *narod*, that he must merge with the peasantry – and a fairly complete picture emerges of what motivated Populists to sympathize with the pogroms. In short, the positive response is best understood as a product of frustrated expectations, Bakuninist *buntarstvo*, and romantic 'muzhikophilism'. It allowed them to view the pogroms as a revolutionary phenomenon. In this perspective the pogroms could be, and were indeed, seen as signalling the beginning of social revolution; and, by the same token, it made good political sense to utilize the riots as *tactical means* of mobilizing the masses towards desired revolutionary ends.

But how realistic was the belief that the pogroms had the potential of sparking a genuine revolutionary bonfire? Was it, as has been generally argued, merely the *fata morgana* of Populist imagination, a self-serving deception to justify a politically and morally inept Machiavellianism? If we examine these questions in the context of autocratic Russian political culture, we find a sound basis to suggest that, contrary to conventional wisdom, the revolutionaries' apocalyptic hopes were not as irrational as may appear at first glance.

For different reasons, the same view was prevalent among government officials who were terribly afraid that the riots might get out of hand. This premonition was clearly articulated by the State Comptroller, D. M. Solskii, when he said of the *pogromshchiki*: 'Today they are harassing the Jews ... Tomorrow it will be the turn of the so-called kulaks ... then of merchants and landowners. In a word, if the authorities stand by passively, we can expect the development of the most devastating socialism.'¹³ As can be seen, this view coincided with the revolutionaries' own assessment of the pogroms. Although they exaggerated isolated incidents of pogrom-related attacks against non-Jews, they were essentially right in recognizing that disorders of any kind, originating spontaneously, threatened the social and political fabric of the autocratic state. In this they were definitely less naive than some of their comrades – and latter-day historians – who thought that the pogroms were engineered by the tsarist officials themselves to divert popular discontent onto the Jews. As Hans Rogger and Michael Aronson have demonstrated

convincingly, the authorities were more frightened than gratified by the pogroms, which they tried to suppress for precisely the same reasons as the revolutionaries tried to utilize them.¹⁴ The shared expectation that the anti-Jewish disorders might unleash a terrible *buntarstvo* in the countryside was probably unwarranted. Yet, while this may have been an unfounded fear in government circles and an illusionary hope in revolutionary circles, the pogroms nonetheless confirmed rather than contradicted 'political reality' as perceived by both the tsarist officials and Populist activists in the wake of Alexander II's assassination: neither questioned the 'inner connection' between the pogroms and tsaricide, and the latter had at least as much reason to be 'gratified' as the former to be 'frightened'. Hence, whether or not the revolutionaries resorted shamelessly to a 'Machiavellian calculation'¹⁵ in their pro-pogrom behaviour is a moot question. For them this was an act of political expediency in a desperate situation; far from being an irrational response nourished by antisemitic sentiment, it was a rational act easily explainable in terms of Populist ideology and contemporary political reality.

The Populists' 'gratification' was not unqualified, however, nor was it translated into action. Among the Narodovoltsy this was clearly expressed in their unwillingness to promote the exclusivist anti-Jewish nature of the *pogromshchiki's* 'rebellion', and, above all else, in their opposition to precisely such an attempt by Romanenko, who resorted to antisemitic agitation to incite 'the people' to further pogroms in order to speed up the revolutionary process. At issue was his proclamation, 'To the Ukrainian People', in which he wrote:

The people of the Ukraine suffer most of all from the Jews. Who takes the land, the woods, the tavern from out of their hands? The Jews! ... Wherever you look, wherever you go – the Jews are everywhere. The Jew curses you, cheats you, drinks your blood ... But now as soon as the muzhiki rise up to free themselves from their enemies as they did in Elizavetgrad, Kiev, Smela, the Tsar at once comes to the rescue of the Jews: the soldiers from Russia are called in and the blood of the muzhik, Christian blood, flows ... You have begun to rebel against the Jews. You have done well. Soon the revolt will be taken across all of Russia against the Tsar, the *pany* [landowning gentry], the Jews.¹⁶

The antisemitic rhetoric of this agitational tract went far beyond the accepted ethical and political norms of revolutionary behaviour and expediency. With the possible exception of Lev Tikhomirov, all leading Narodovoltsy found Romanenko's unscrupulous demagoguery morally and politically reprehensible regardless of his subsequent claim that he was motivated solely by revolutionary considerations.¹⁷ Those socialists who responded positively to the pogroms always understood that these events made sense only if their perpetrators could be induced to shift their wrath

away from the Jewish people to the rich and privileged classes. Instead of fuelling the antisemitic violence of the mobs, they meant to redirect this violence into revolutionary non-Jewish channels. Romanenko's agitation invalidated this principle and, as such, was considered a self-defeating exercise.

Utterly appalled by Romanenko's unscrupulous and inexpedient utilization of popular prejudice, members of the almost defunct Executive Committee scurried to destroy all remaining copies of the proclamation.¹⁸ But, alas, too many were already in circulation to undo the damage. They irrevocably tarnished Narodnaia Volia's reputation, not only antagonizing its Jewish membership but also furnishing ample ammunition for historians to 'prove' the party's – if not the revolutionary movement's – antisemitism and concomitant 'official position'. That neither the Narodovoltsy nor the Chernoperedeltsy could bring themselves to disavow publicly the Romanenko proclamation merely compromised them even further in the eyes of their critics. Surely, was this not just another manifestation of the revolutionaries' 'antisemitic mood'? Again, the truth lies elsewhere: namely in their proverbial desire 'to have their cake and eat it too' – to have the pogroms *qua* revolution minus antisemitism.

That this was not possible would soon have become obvious to most, had they actually participated in the 'pogrom-rebellion', to give it its proper revolutionary twist. To be sure, some did and were 'out in the streets, "on picket duty", watching the mob, studying its mood and "doing everything possible to lend the disturbances a revolutionary character"'. Predictably, they quickly realized their quixotic role of trying to play the holy 'nihilist guard' of revolutionary purity in an unholy mob of antisemitic impurity. But these were isolated incidences of participation and recognition.¹⁹

For the most part the revolutionaries limited themselves to ambiguous declarations disapproving indiscriminate 'beating of Jews' while tacitly approving the 'pogrom-rebellion'. This duplicity is exemplified in an article which appeared in *Zerno*, the workers' paper of the St Petersburg Chernoperedeltsy:

Why did they [the *pogromshchiki*] beat only Jews? Yes, you, brothers, look closely at the Jews themselves and you will see that not all by far are rich, not all are kulaks. There are many poor among them who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow, who are squeezed by kulaks and masters no less than you... Understand that all workers of whatever religion and nation must unite, must work against the common enemy.²⁰

But lest the call for universal brotherhood stifle the rebellious instinct of 'the people', this passage was followed up with the all too familiar theme

of Jewish exploitation: 'The Jew owns the bars and taverns, rents the land from the landowners and leases it out to the peasants at two or three times the rate, he buys wheat from the field, goes in for money-lending and charges per centages so high that the people call them simply "Yiddish" rates.'²¹ The ambiguity expressed in this, as well as most other Chernoperedeltsy documents speaks for itself and reveals, as Jonathan Frankel notes, 'clear signs of inner confusion'.²²

Perhaps representative of a generally more sensitive attitude towards the specifically antisemitic nature of the pogroms on the part of the Chernoperedeltsy, the views expressed in these pronouncements are nonetheless similar in motivation to the positive response of the mainstream Narodovoltsy: namely, to utilize the pogroms for political ends by transforming the energy generated antisemitically into revolutionary power. Thus, instead of condemning the anti-Jewish riots *in toto*, of chastising their perpetrators without qualification, the revolutionaries took care not to insult popular sentiment lest this might endanger their reputation among 'the people' or, even worse, create a rift between themselves and the volatile masses – the sole *raison d'être* of their political existence. This sort of inner conflict, between political expediency and higher socialist principles, was also at the source of the failure of prominent Populists like Georgii Plekhanov and Peter Lavrov, neither of whom can be suspected of antisemitism, to take a firm public stand against the pogroms and their most outspoken advocate, Romanenko.

As the acknowledged leader of the Chernoperedeltsy, both inside and outside Russia, Plekhanov was particularly anxious to clear his party of pogrom complicity. Defending himself years later against the accusation that in 1881–82 neither he nor his comrades openly voiced their opposition to the Romanenko proclamation, Plekhanov insists that, 'except for only a few', the Chernoperedeltsy did not share the pro-pogrom attitude of the Narodovoltsy and that, in fact, they were opposed to it. Although this contrasting of respective attitudes is exaggerated, there is much truth in this claim. He rightly notes that in Russia a former Chernoperedelets, Iakov Stefanovich, was instrumental in suppressing the Romanenko 'antisemitic declaration of the Executive Committee', and that abroad his own party, as well as other *émigrés*, refused to cooperate with the Narodovoltsy in the publication of a new journal (*Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*) as long as their leader, Lev Tikhomirov, tolerated the views expressed by Romanenko. Apparently, Tikhomirov yielded to this pressure and even promised to write an article 'denouncing the pogroms in the name of the revolutionary movement'. For his part, Plekhanov intended to publish a detailed refutation of the pogroms

entitled 'Socialism and the Antisemitic Movement'.²³ So far so good. There was no lack of good intentions and, as a matter of fact, we do know for certain that Plekhanov and his group of Chernoperedeltsy were deeply distressed when the news of the pogroms reached them in Switzerland.²⁴

In defence of Chernyi Peredel, Plekhanov could have cited the protracted attempts of his party to mobilize the revolutionary community abroad to issue a brochure to denounce the pogroms. He preferred not to mention it. For the project never materialized because political expediency prevented its sponsors, including Plekhanov, from renouncing publicly what they repudiated privately. Strictly speaking, they were at a loss how to square their own revolutionary aspirations with the popular antisemitism of their supposed revolutionary clientele, the *narod*. This dilemma was clearly articulated in Lavrov's response to Pavel Akselrod's request to collaborate in writing the said brochure. Refusing to apply himself to this task, Lavrov justified his decision thus:

I must admit that I consider the [pogrom-Jewish] question extremely complicated, and, practically speaking, highly difficult for a party which seeks to draw near to the people and arouse it against the government. To solve it theoretically, on paper, is very easy. But in view of current popular passions and the necessity of Russian socialists to have the people wherever possible on their side it is quite another matter.²⁵

To remain silent appeared to be most realistic under the circumstances. In other words, they simply dropped the issue of an anti-pogrom declaration because they did not know how to deal with the so-called 'antisemitic movement' in the context of revolutionary politics. Rather than taking a definite position one way or another, they were hoping that the whole pogrom affair would pass into oblivion.

The ambiguity which characterized Plekhanov's and Lavrov's hesitation to state in print their stand on the pogroms was common to almost all revolutionaries, regardless of whether they responded *positively* or, like them, *negatively* to this unsightly spectacle. In either case, political expediency and ideological abstractions governed their reaction: it motivated the former to adopt a pro-pogrom attitude while condemning its extremist manifestation in the form of Romanenko's proclamation; it inhibited the latter from adopting an explicitly anti-pogrom attitude in the form of a public criticism of the document. But neither of the respective responses and failures to repudiate Romanenko 'officially' was conditioned by 'the existence of *bona fide* antisemitic sentiments above and beyond the demands of political expediency' and nourished by 'a definitely antisemitic current in the ranks of the early Russian socialists'.²⁶ Surely, antisemitism does not explain why the Romanenko

proclamation 'called forth an outburst of indignation among the revolutionaries', nor does it account for their reluctance – as exemplified by Plekhanov and Lavrov – to vent this indignation publicly.²⁷

Antisemitism aside, are we to conclude that the reluctance of leading Narodovoltsy and Chernoperedeltsy to take a definite stand on the pogrom issue 'left statements such as Romanenko's as the *official position* of the Russian revolutionary movement'?²⁸ By default, in a formal sense, the answer is yes. In practice, however, this was clearly not the case. Although most Populists shared many of Romanenko's anti-Jewish prejudices and fallacious rationalizations, they were not prepared to equate their own hazy views of seeing the pogroms as a touchstone of revolution with his vulgar extremism in actively encouraging the *pogromshchiki's* orgy of destruction as a positive act in itself.²⁹ No revolutionary of any standing, inside or outside Narodnaia Volia, endorsed Romanenko's antisemitic transgression. Evidently, Romanenko had managed to usurp the authority of the Executive Committee which, in the person of Tikhomirov, failed to prevent his proclamation from being printed on its party press. While this blunder does not absolve the Executive Committee from its responsibility, it is wrong to equate the Romanenko proclamation with Narodnaia Volia's or even the revolutionary movement's 'official position'.³⁰ Such an interpretation, like its antisemitic correlate, contributes little to our understanding of the Populist response to the pogroms, which, if anything, exhibited many *ambiguous positions*. It obscures the fact that this response was highly differentiated and hardly antisemitic even in its pro-pogrom expression. It simply distorts the complex picture of Populist emotions and motives. Finally, by speciously projecting Romanenko's views on to the movement as a whole, we are ill-equipped to comprehend the reaction of Jewish Populists both to the pogroms in general and the pro-pogrom response of their Gentile comrades in particular.

In his skilful analysis of the Russian Populists' apparent pro-pogrom attitude, Leo Motzkin finds it rather intriguing that the presence of many Jews in the revolutionary movement should not have had a corrective influence on their comrades' distorted perception of the pogroms. 'Yes', he asks rhetorically, 'where were the *Jewish* social revolutionaries, what was their stand?' As he implies, in their ranks there was nothing but silence or, even worse, conformity with the general pro-pogrom sentiment.³¹ This, of course, conflicts with Tscherikower's thesis that 'the pogroms called forth a completely contrary reaction in all Jewish circles than was the case in [antisemitically inclined] Russian Populist circles'.³² What accounts for these contradictory statements? One reason

is undoubtedly that Motzkin, in contrast to Tscherikower, quite rightly does not link antisemitism with revolutionary behaviour. The other reason is that both fail to appreciate the complexity of the Jewish response. Just as historians have been overly simplistic in their generalizations of the Gentile response, they have labelled the pogrom reaction of Jewish socialists as either positive or negative – neither of which is entirely true. Moreover, this response varied in time and location.

The initial response of radicalized Jewish youth to the pogroms is perhaps best characterized by Isaak Gurvich who, with reference to his home town Minsk, writes:

The pogroms made a deep impression on the Jewish public. A Palestinian movement arose among the [local] youth. But we, in our revolutionary circles, remained indifferent to the whole thing. [Like our gentile comrades] we were also under the influence of the theory that the pogroms are a popular uprising [*a folks-oyfstand*], and any *folks-oyfstand* is good. It revolutionizes the masses. Certainly, the Jews suffered as a consequence – but all the same, the gentile revolutionaries of the nobility also called on the peasants to rise up against their fathers and brothers!³³

A similar account emerges from the pages of Abraham Cahan's autobiography. Describing the mood of his Jewish comrades who, like him, were associated with Narodnaia Volia circles in Vilna, Vitebsk, and other places in the north-eastern regions of the Pale of Settlement, he states that, while the pogroms caused some Jewish youngsters to rediscover their own people and to work on their behalf for emigration to America or Palestine:

I must admit that these new nationalists comprised only a small group. And Jewish revolutionaries who fell in with the nationalist movement also comprised a small group. Among the Jewish revolutionaries were some who considered the anti-semitic massacres to be a good omen. They theorized that the pogroms were an instinctive outpouring of the revolutionary anger of the people, driving the Russian masses against their oppressors. The uneducated Russian people knew that the Czar, the officials and the Jews sucked their blood, they argued. So the Ukrainian peasants attacked the Jews, the 'per centniks'. The revolutionary torch had been lit and would next be applied to the officials and the Czar himself.³⁴

As Cahan admits, he himself was not beyond this sort of reasoning. The same can be said of Gurvich who, just prior to the pogroms, wrote a pamphlet in which he resorted to popular antisemitic sentiments in order to incite the Belorussian peasantry to rebel against the landowners and tavern-owners.³⁵

Neither Gurvich nor Cahan, nor the majority of their Jewish comrades

experienced the pogroms at first hand. This may well explain their indifference to Jewish suffering, which in many ways was merely an extension of their general indifference, if not hostility, towards traditional Jewish life. For the average Jewish socialist this life, like the tsarist order which sustained its parasitic and backward existence, was doomed to disappear. Viewing reality through Populist spectacles, he saw things as did his Gentile peers: Jews were essentially an 'unproductive petit-bourgeois, shopkeeping merchant class', the incarnation of social evil; in contrast, peasants were a genuine productive class, 'the repository of virtue and the potential architect of a Good Society'.³⁶ To be sure, many Jewish Populists did not wholly subscribe to this distorted black and white dichotomy; and, emotionally, they were never quite at ease with their idealization of the authentic *narod* at the expense of completely negating the Jewish people. But this uneasiness usually gave way to a higher sense of dedication to a cause that would also benefit the Jews, even though some of them – especially the rich – might suffer as a result of socialistically inspired pogroms. As one historian put it rather felicitously, 'just as Abraham felt he had to break a personal tie in order to display devotion to a higher being, so Jewish revolutionaries, too, compulsively disavowed their Jewish ties and ignored immediate injustices for the sake of a higher cause'.³⁷ Like their comrades of the gentry, they would have to sacrifice their own kind on the altar of revolutionary progress. Thus, already alienated and often physically remote from the Jewish world, the response of committed Jewish socialists to the pogrom was conditioned by a misplaced sense of loyalty that was rooted in their identification with the revolutionary movement and its lofty ideals. Consequently, they at best remained indifferent to the victims of the *pogromshchiki* or at worst promoted their action.

This indifference did not last for long, however. Neither their ideological blinkers nor their emotional attachment to the revolutionary movement could prevent them from seeing and sensing the exclusively antisemitic nature of the so-called *folks-oyfstand*. How this 'awakening' occurred has been graphically illustrated by M. B. Ratner, a Populist and latter-day Socialist Revolutionary, who related the story of one Jewish Narodovolets for whom the Kiev pogrom of April 1881 was a real eye-opener. In anticipation of witnessing the revolutionary transformation of the riot, this individual – wearing a red blouse in peasant fashion – mingled with the *pogromshchiki* to observe and possibly encourage their primeval rebellious instincts. But when the mobs had completed their destructive work in the poorest quarters of the Jewish community, he witnessed with horror that they had no desire whatsoever to carry on the 'rebellion' against the bourgeoisie and the authorities. So devastating

was his disillusionment that he almost went mad in his recognition of the 'actual state of things'.³⁸

For most Jewish revolutionaries such an 'enlightening experience' was not readily available, nor indeed necessary, to raise grave doubts about the wisdom of supporting the pogroms. Less drastic, but in the long run equally effective, in changing their attitude was their growing awareness that the pogroms were directed against the impoverished Jewish masses as an ethno-religious group, rather than as a social class of exploiters. A good example of this process of recognition relates to the already mentioned pro-pogrom proclamation which Isaak Gurvich had prepared on behalf of the Jewish Chernoperedeltsy and Narodovoltsy in Minsk. Commenting on this affair, Gurvich reminisced:

Well, I wrote this proclamation in which ... I called on the peasants of the Vilna, Minsk, and Mogilev provinces to rise up against landowners and innkeepers. I gave the proclamation to Grinfest [printer of the Chernyi Peredel press in Minsk]. Several days later I met him again and asked what he thought of my proclamation. He told me rather nicely that it had been decided not to print the proclamation because of its appeal [to the peasants] to beat land and tavern-owners alike. 'Who are those innkeepers in the villages? Aren't they all Jewish paupers?' – he asked me? I agreed with him ... Perhaps, you might say that it was class instinct which spoke in him: his father owned a tavern.³⁹

Once the pogroms were in full swing, Grinfest's objections became ever more relevant and quickly gained support among his friends who, at first, had been rather ecstatic about the 'pogrom-rebellion'.

This sense of growing disillusionment is well documented by their reaction to the original manuscript of the already cited pogrom article of the St Petersburg section of Chernyi Peredel, which they were supposed to print for *Zerno*, the party's paper for workers. I. Getsov, one of the printers of the Minsk press, noted years later:

On us, the typesetters, this article had a repulsive effect. Unanimously, we decided not to print it ... With the article in my pocket I hurried to St Petersburg. To Zagorskii's [the author's] credit it must be said that I had no difficulty convincing him that these pogroms were not a class movement, but were based on superstition, prejudices, misunderstandings, etc., that its victims were in general as impoverished and proletarian as the *pogromshchiki* themselves ... [Zagorskii] destroyed the article and immediately wrote another, completely different in spirit. Triumphantly, I returned [to Minsk] by the next train ... I was happy and my comrades were delighted.⁴⁰

As Getsov points out, the Chernoperedeltsy abroad were equally delighted with the revised article when it appeared a month later in *Zerno*.⁴¹ Clearly, the disillusioned Minsk Chernoperedeltsy had taken the initiative in disassociating their party from prevailing pro-pogrom

sentiments. Yet, their negative reaction to the pogroms did not translate into a complete rejection of the whole phenomenon.

As shown in the previous discussion of the *Zerno* article, this document was still ambiguous, even after it had been rewritten in a 'completely different spirit'. That the Jewish Chernoperedeltsy were nevertheless 'happy' with the final version shows that they themselves shared an ambivalence which, as in the case of their Gentile comrades, merely showed that they were still very much under the influence of Populist abstractions and political thinking. But, all the same, elated they were! Perhaps rightly so, since it must have given them great emotional satisfaction that they had been able to convince others of the immorality and inexpediency of supporting the pogroms *in toto*. A similar Jewish response was also forthcoming among the Narodovoltsy in the case of the Romanenko proclamation.

For a long time it has been assumed 'that the text of the proclamation had been approved by a member of the Executive Committee who was Jewish by nationality'.⁴² Calling the culprit by name, Lev Deich accused Savelii Zlatopolskii – the only Jewish member of the Committee in 1881 – of having sanctioned 'the cowardly proclamation' (*di nidertrekhtige proklamatsie*).⁴³ In an attempt to clear the 'good name' of Zlatopolskii once and for all, A. N. Pribyleva brought up the issue in her memoirs:

In January 1882 ... I was in St Petersburg together with Zlatopolskii, and often happened to witness how he, time and again, objected to the [anti-Jewish] theme of the proclamation. He was not able to talk quietly about it. Each time he was in a state of strong emotional distress. He said that the proclamation left an indelible stain on the reputation of the Executive Committee, and that under no circumstances could he forgive the Committee for such an action. When the proclamation was published in Moscow, Zlatopolskii was preoccupied with current affairs in St Petersburg. However, knowing about its appearance, he dropped everything and went to Moscow. There, he immediately forced the decision to destroy the proclamation.⁴⁴

Thus, instead of sanctioning the proclamation, Zlatopolskii was responsible for its removal. Like his fellow-Jews in Chernyi Peredel, he vigorously opposed extremist pro-pogrom statements and, like them, he was fully supported by his comrades in Narodnaia Volia (except that, unlike Zagorskii, Romanenko did not rescind his views).

Unfortunately, the ill-functioning Committee was in no position to destroy the proclamation completely despite energetic efforts by leading Narodovoltsy. In the absence of effective controls over local circles and a clear policy statement denouncing the proclamation, it was inevitable that some copies should remain in circulation. That nonetheless only a few were distributed in the provinces was also due to the fact that Jewish

Narodovoltsy in Odessa and other places had refused to distribute the proclamation.⁴⁵ Like their ‘star’ in the Executive Committee, these ‘lower-rank’ activists were unwilling to cooperate in Romanenko’s illicit enterprise.

Ironically, several weeks prior to the Romanenko leaflet, Jewish Narodovoltsy in Vilna had issued a proclamation in Yiddish in which they announced: ‘Jews! – they try to tell you that we, the nihilists, have been inciting the mobs against you. Do not believe it, we are not your enemies. This has been done by government agents in order to direct the wrath of the agitated people away from the government against you. Now you know who your enemies are.’⁴⁶ This document clearly marked a reversal of previous pro-pogrom attitudes. Accounting for this change, it has been rightly noted that ‘the revolutionary circles in Vilna consisted of Jewish intellectuals who, in such centres of Jewish population like Vilna, could not overlook the large number of Jewish proletarians. Therefore, it was easier for them to find the right standpoint toward the pogroms.’⁴⁷

Evidently, such a change of attitude was also apparent in the case of Jewish revolutionaries elsewhere. For instance, despite their Populist disposition and alienation from Jewish life, the Minsk Chernoperedeltsy were still sufficiently embedded in Jewish reality to recognize more quickly than many of their Gentile comrades that they had been mistaken in their positive perception of the pogroms. Because of this, but also because of a lingering sense of Jewish identity (clearly visible in Grinfest and Zlatopolskii), the Jewish radicals in Vilna, Minsk, Odessa and other locales woke up to the foolishness of equating anti-Jewish violence with revolutionary virtue. Hence, from an initial sense of indifference to, and/or approval of, the pogroms, Jewish socialists had undergone a process of disillusionment which, quite soon after the inception of the riots, caused them to oppose pro-pogrom manifestations – so much so that they played a crucial role in fostering anti-pogrom sentiments in both parties.⁴⁸ Yet, what was still lacking was an all-party resolution in the spirit of the Vilna declaration.

The attempts and eventual failure to come up with such a declaration went right to the heart of the dilemma facing Jewish socialists, especially those who insisted that the revolutionaries must publicly repudiate the antisemitic dimension of the pogroms and its approbation by people like Romanenko. This concern was particularly pronounced among Jewish *émigrés*. Unlike their compatriots in Russia, they had no illusions about the pogroms and were deeply disturbed by the bad news. Expressing this mood, Rozaliia Plekhanova wrote: ‘Deep down in the soul of each of us, revolutionaries of Jewish birth, there was a sense of hurt pride and

infinite pity for our own, and many of us were strongly tempted to devote ourselves to serving our injured, humiliated and persecuted people.'⁴⁹ Since, however, they could not envisage 'a return to the Jewish people' at the expense of leaving the revolutionary movement, the least they felt compelled to do was to let the Jews know that the revolution had not forsaken them. Tragically, this desire to fulfil their moral obligation as Jews yielded no concrete results, even though one of their comrades, Pavel Akselrod, had already drawn up a brochure to this effect. The brochure in question was none other than the one for which Akselrod had unsuccessfully sought Lavrov's assistance.

The genesis and demise of the Akselrod brochure testify to what one historian has termed 'a conflict between Jewish loyalty and revolutionary dedication'.⁵⁰ As far as 'Jewish loyalty' was concerned, the pogroms caused almost all Jewish revolutionaries, sooner or later, and to varying degrees, to rediscover their Jewishness and to identify more closely with the predicament of their own people. This change of attitude, and the vocal anti-pogrom manifestations on the part of outspoken Jewish Chernoperedeltsy and Narodovoltsy elicited, as we have seen, a sympathetic and accommodating response from their Gentile comrades. But when faced with the reality of revolutionary politics, the failure of their respective parties to renounce publicly pro-pogrom statements, Jewish revolutionaries were caught in the dilemma of how to reconcile their Jewish sensibilities with 'revolutionary dedication' – sentiments that appeared irreconcilable at a time when nationalism and socialism were considered mutually exclusive by Russian socialists. Although it occurred to some – even prior to the pogroms – that there was not necessarily a conflict between the two, for most the *Zeitgeist* dictated that a choice had to be made between 'Jewish national' or 'Russian revolutionary' loyalty. The process of taking sides was extremely tortuous and many wavered before deciding whether their loyalty belonged to the Jewish people or, ultimately, to the Russian revolutionary movement.

What made this process so tortuous? What were the ingredients which tipped the scale this way or that in what has been considered an unprecedented 'crisis of consciousness' among Russian-Jewish socialists? Was it merely a question of 'faith in socialist cosmopolitanism' that was more prevalent in some than others – or were there additional factors which perhaps proved more decisive in making the tragic choice to 'go national' or to remain a Russian socialist? To answer these questions let us turn to three Jewish revolutionaries: Grigorii Gurevich, Pavel Akselrod, and Lev Deich, all intimately involved with the unsuccessful venture of an anti-pogrom brochure.

The Narodovolets Gurevich personified those Jews for whom it was seemingly least difficult to break ties with the Russian revolutionary movement. Having been most persistent in demanding an anti-pogrom declaration, he was utterly disappointed when his efforts brought forth nothing but the stillborn Akselrod brochure. Consequently, he felt there was no longer any future for Jews in a movement which was prepared to sacrifice a whole people for the sake of humanity's salvation. He broke his long-standing ties with the revolutionary movement and, after a short spell of passionate advocacy of Palestinian emigration, dedicated himself solely to Jewish affairs, both as a writer for Russian-Jewish journals and as a secretary of the Jewish community in Kiev, where he was also active as a member of the local chapter of Zionist-Socialist territorialists.⁵¹

But Gurevich was not representative of the choice made by most Jewish revolutionaries. More characteristic for resolving – or perhaps repressing – the conflict between 'Jewish loyalty' and 'revolutionary dedication' was the capitulation to *political expediency* in the name of *revolutionary solidarity* of Pavel Akselrod and Lev Deich. They both abhorred the pogroms and were in agreement that their party, Chernyi Peredel, should issue an appropriate statement in cooperation with Narodnaia Volia. But when Akselrod applied himself to this task, in the form of a brochure addressed to 'the Jewish socialist youth', Deich strongly disagreed with its format and ideas. While the actual content of this document need not detain us here, the Deich–Akselrod correspondence relating to it is of considerable interest. It offers a rare insight into what motivated Jewish socialists to remain loyal to the revolutionary movement not only in spite of, but also because of the pogroms.⁵²

Akselrod felt that the pogroms demanded a fresh look at the Jewish Question and the role of Jewish revolutionaries in the movement. Under the influence of Gurevich, he seriously considered including in his brochure the idea of emigration to Palestine for Jews persecuted in Russia. This reasoning was not well received by Deich who, speaking on behalf of the Geneva Chernopredeltsy, declared:

We, as socialist-internationalists, should not at all recognize special obligations toward 'co-nationals' [*soplemenniki*] ... Of course, we do not say that one ought to remain indifferent ... But our approach to the [Jewish] problem must be based on a universal-socialist standpoint that seeks to fuse nationalities instead of isolating one nationality [the Jews] still more than is already the case. Therefore ... do not advise them to move to Palestine where they will only become still further frozen in their prejudices ... If they are to emigrate – then [let them go] to America where they will merge with the local population.⁵³

The anti-Palestinian argument of Deich derived much strength from the fact that his 'universal-socialist standpoint' had been reinforced by

an international authority, the French geographer and anarchist Elisée Réclus, who, wrote Gurevich, 'categorically dissuaded us [Jewish socialists] from devoting ourselves to the colonization of Palestine' because it is 'a country unsuited for settlement – there Jews could live only by trade and exploitation of the native population'.⁵⁴ The message was clear: instead of helping Jews, conditions in Palestine would reproduce the age-old pattern of 'unproductive' Jewish existence and, consequently, generate conflicts between Jews and Arabs – the local 'productive' population. Even for a fervent *Palestinets* like Gurevich, this uninviting prospect was sufficient for him to discard 'completely the question of Palestinian colonization'.⁵⁵ Needless to say, Akselrod followed suit. Though for him there was another 'major motive' that militated more than anything else against the idea 'to transform Palestine into a Jewish fatherland': namely Elisée Réclus' 'comment that [Jews] would clash ... with the Arabs for whom Palestine is their fatherland not only according to tradition, but also [by virtue of] actual [residence]'.⁵⁶

For Deich the Palestinian solution, like any other issue concerned with Jewish rather than 'universal-socialist' interests, was tainted by nationalism and, therefore, beneath serious consideration. That does not mean that Deich did not care about the misfortunes of his 'co-nationals'. But, as is obvious from his correspondence with Akselrod, Deich refused to deal with the pogrom question in any other context than that prescribed by universal socialist principles. Thus, he also objected to Akselrod's suggestion, as spelled out in the brochure, that 'the cosmopolitan idea of socialism' should not prevent Jews from upholding the legitimate interests of 'the Jewish masses' and from being active in a Jewish environment. This, Akselrod stated, ought to be the proper task of Jewish socialists, to which they must apply themselves immediately 'by working among the masses to create, in alliance with Russian revolutionaries, the possibility of quick political and social change' – a change which best serves 'a radical solution of "the Jewish question"', that is, the transformation of Jews into 'productive elements' and their amalgamation with 'corresponding strata of the "native" population'.⁵⁷ All this did not sit well with Deich. In his opinion, a socialist statement addressing Jews and their plight would have to be devoid of national sentiment. He, as well as his Russian comrades, had envisaged a brochure that was not concerned with the *Jewish* tasks of socialist Jews, but merely with the tasks of explaining to Jews in general the socio-economic causes of the pogroms, the need to cooperate with the revolutionary movement in its fight for universal emancipation, and the necessity of merging with other nationalities of Russia.⁵⁸ Anything that went beyond this framework of reference was not only utopian, but also smacked of nationalist

deviation – a heresy which served neither the revolutionary cause nor the long-term resolution of the Jewish Question.

In the meantime ideological disagreements were increasingly overshadowed by political considerations which had been raised by Lavrov in his letter to Akselrod. As we know, Lavrov thought it inadvisable to publish an anti-pogrom brochure because of the inherent dilemma of alienating precisely those people – the *narod* – whom the Populists wanted to mobilize against the tsarist state. While Akselrod was reluctant to comply with the demands of political expediency, Deich fully accepted Lavrov's 'realism'. Adding his own comments to the aforementioned letter, he told Akselrod:

I agree fully with the thoughts expressed by Peter Lavrov. Realistically, in practice, the Jewish question is now almost insoluble for the revolutionaries. What, for example, are they to do now in Balta where they beat up the Jews? To intercede for them means, as Réclus says, 'to call up the hatred of the peasants against the revolutionaries who not only killed the Tsar but also defend the Jews'. ... [This] is simply a dead-end avenue for Jews and revolutionaries alike ... Of course, it is our utmost obligation to seek equal rights for the Jews ... but that, so to speak, is activity in the higher spheres ... Do not think that this [situation] has not pained and confused me ... ; but all the same, I remain always a member of the Russian revolutionary party and do not intend to part from it even for a single day, for this contradiction, like some others, was of course not created by the party.⁵⁹

Exasperated by Akselrod's refusal to accept Lavrov's verdict, Deich, in a highly emotional letter, appealed to him not to publish his brochure for the sake of revolutionary solidarity. Replying to a previous comment by Akselrod that not even the German Social Democrats demanded 'to such an extent the suppression of individual views in deference to party and personal ties', Deich brushed such a comparison aside and pleaded with him 'not to write the brochure, not so much for party reasons as for *personal* considerations for a small group of former Chernoperedeltsy who find themselves in extraordinary circumstances where they need the tightest unity, a terrible solidarity, to have some influence [on the revolutionary movement]'. Hence, Deich, declared, 'in view of precisely *such* a solidarity, we do not want your brochure'.⁶⁰ Akselrod, in the end, yielded to Deich's reasoning and quietly shelved his brochure without ever again mentioning the pogroms of 1881 or raising the subject of a Jewish 'going to the people'.⁶¹

Was it simply an unimpaired belief in 'socialist cosmopolitanism', buttressed by demands of solidarity, which compelled Deich and Akselrod, and so many others like them, to give in to the demands of political expediency? Why, in short, was their disillusionment super-

seded by a reaffirmation of revolutionary loyalty? A principal motive in all this was unquestionably their strong belief that any and all social problems could be resolved by a socialist restructuring of the world, and that therefore the Jewish Question as well must be answered with a revolution inaugurating 'the dream of a happy, united humanity'.⁶² But this was only half the story. An equally – if not more – important motif in their pro-Russian revolutionary choice was the existential-emotional attachment which chained Jewish socialists to the movement – a motif which surfaced in Deich's letters to Akselrod, last but not least in his appeal for 'terrible solidarity'.

This 'terrible solidarity' assumes a much more complex meaning in defining the relationship of Jews in the revolutionary movement than that of individual subordination to the will of the Gentile majority. It symbolizes their personal identification with a group of people that accepted them as equals and judged them according to their norms and values. What this meant in terms of 'deserting' the movement because of pro-pogrom attitudes has been lucidly described by Abraham Cahan in his fictional rendering of Jewish-Gentile relations in *Narodnaia Volia*. The heroine of his novel

was under the sway of two forces ... One of these forces was ... [personal loyalty to gentile friends in the movement]; the other was Public Opinion – the public opinion of underground Russia. According to the moral standard of that Russia everyone who did not share in the hazards of the revolutionary movement was a 'careerist', a self-seeker absorbed exclusively in the feathering of his own nest; the Jew who took the special interests of his own race specially to heart was a narrow-minded nationalist, and the Nihilist who withdrew from the movement was a renegade. The power which this 'underground' public opinion exerted over her was all the greater because of *the close ties of affection* which ... bound the *active* revolutionists to each other ... The notion of these people thinking of her as a renegade was too horrible to be indulged in for a single moment.⁶³

Ultimately, these emotions proved more powerful than 'socialist cosmopolitanism'. The latter was a necessary, but not sufficient cause in motivating Jews to remain loyal to their revolutionary calling. Without the bonds of friendship, common experience and sentiment linking Jew and Gentile, there would have been little other than intangible ideological reasons to sustain a Jewish socialist in his 'crisis of consciousness'.

For the average revolutionary Jew the movement was more than just a political association seeking the millennium. It was for all practical purposes the only place where he felt 'at home', where love and marriage between Jew and Gentile was the norm that foreshadowed the new world in the making. This was no abstract cosmopolitanism; this was a daily experience of 'intimate comradeship and mutual devotion'.⁶⁴ This was

an existential experience that went much deeper than any formal sense of party loyalty. It permeated the whole being of those Jews who were deeply embedded in the social and spiritual world of revolutionary Populism. Thus, regardless of how much they may have suffered from witnessing the brutal persecution of their 'own race', they suffered even more from the prospect of ostracism by 'underground public opinion' – the opinion of people who meant more to them than anything else.⁶⁵

This existential dimension of revolutionary loyalty did not, of course, apply to all socialist Jews equally. There were some like Gurevich who, while rendering invaluable service to the movement, had always been located more in a Jewish than Russian setting. Generally, they were active either in predominantly Jewish circles in Russia and abroad or else stood on the periphery of the movement.⁶⁶ Thus, their identity was never entirely rooted in the *Lebenswelt* of revolutionary Populism. Consequently, when the anti-Jewish riots erupted and touched off a general soul-searching, they were much less vulnerable than others to the pressures of 'underground opinion' in reassessing their role within the movement. Peer pressure and 'intimate comradeship' were not overriding factors in their deliberation whether or not to remain a Russian socialist. For them the issue was really that their Gentile comrades had not lived up to the very principles of international socialism. Far from being the supra-national spokesmen of all the disadvantaged people of Russia, in tolerating and abetting the pogroms, they had revealed themselves as narrow-minded socialists – or, even worse, as Russian chauvinists – who excluded the Jews from the brotherhood of international proletarians. In this they had violated precisely that universal humanistic premise of socialism which had motivated and sustained Gurevich and others in joining and serving the Russian revolutionary movement. Now, they felt deceived by its parties. Largely uninhibited by personal-existential considerations, they responded without moral qualms in trading in their erstwhile revolutionary loyalty for a return to the Jewish people.

What they had lost in this 'exchange of loyalties' was not, however, so much their 'faith in socialist cosmopolitanism' (which, evidently, many retained since they remained socialists – albeit of 'Jewish denomination'), but their faith in the Russian revolutionary movement as the guardian of socialist purity in Russia. Hence, the real reason for their change of allegiance was not disillusionment with socialism and its cosmopolitan ideals *per se*, but rather the absence of irrevocable existential ties to their erstwhile comrades-in-arms.

For those bound by these ties 'socialist cosmopolitanism' remained the credo of the 'socialist church' in Russia. As active members of

Chernyi Peredel and Narodnaia Volia, they were wholly absorbed in the daily affairs of the revolutionary movement, a world which subsumed their whole mode of existence. Short of outright antisemitism, there was nothing persuasive enough to make them leave the 'church'. This option was available only to the Gureviches who, unlike the Deiches, were less embedded in the Russian revolutionary community – or to put it differently – much less well equipped to withstand the 'nationalist challenge' of the pogroms.

Returning to the cosmopolitan-antisemitic paradigm that has governed much of historical scholarship on the Russian and Jewish response to the pogroms, it is safe to conclude that this conceptual framework suffers from serious shortcomings. 'Socialist cosmopolitanism' was definitely not a defining characteristic which set 'loyalists' and 'deserters' apart. This 'faith' was shared by all Jewish socialists and, therefore, cannot be considered a *decisive variable* in their choice to leave or remain in the revolutionary movement. More appropriately, it was a *constant* in the complex equation of factors which were at work in the 'tortuous process' of choosing sides. At stake was really their faith in the Russian revolutionary movement – and here the *decisive variable* was the degree to which Jews identified themselves with the revolutionary community, which in itself was largely a function of their sociological embeddedness. The only other variable which could have cancelled the existential attachment tying Jews to their Gentile comrades would have been antisemitism among the latter. But there was very little of it. Indeed, Jewish socialists themselves – including most 'deserters' – denied the existence of 'revolutionary antisemitism'.

Few would have agreed with Tscherikower's statements that antisemitism was rife among the revolutionaries of the 1870s and that in the early 1880s its 'symptoms boldly surfaced' with 'the well-known antisemitic proclamation issued by "Narodnaia Volia"',⁶⁷ The first to object to this would have been the prominent Narodovolets Aron Zundeleovich, whom Tscherikower called 'the most Jewish of Jewish revolutionaries'.⁶⁸ Taking his friend Deich to task for his partisan zeal in accusing Narodnaia Volia of antisemitism, Zundeleovich wrote to him:

It does not please me that you have repeatedly stated in print that the pogrom proclamation of Romanenko was a manifestation of antisemitism ... This was a distortion of revolutionary enthusiasm, a deformation of the idea of revolution which [some] were prepared to achieve by any means. As little as the golden charter proves that you were a monarchist, does this Romanenko proclamation prove that 'Narodnaia Volia' was antisemitic ... [Thus,] leave this theme alone.⁶⁹

Zundeleovich's opinion was probably shared by Gurevich, who in his explanation as to why he left the party does not refer to its supposed

antisemitism or anti-Jewish prejudices. He was simply appalled by what Zundeleovich called the 'deformation of the idea of revolution', the unscrupulous implementation of the notion that the end justifies the means.⁷⁰ Moreover, both would have objected to the claim that 'the antisemitic mood' was already felt in the 1870s.⁷¹ There were certainly anti-Jewish prejudices, but these were also prevalent among Jewish socialists. In any case, they did not equate these prejudices with traditional Judeophobia. Thus, as Isaak Gurvich said, '[we] did not feel any antisemitism in the [radical] intellectual circles' of the 1870s.⁷² Rather the contrary was the case, as Solomon Chudnovskii, for example, found during the Odessa pogrom of 1871. As we know, this 'sad event' deepened his commitment to the revolutionary cause because his Gentile comrades, especially the future leader of Narodnaia Volia, Andrei Zheliabov, shared his indignation at what had happened and agreed with his conclusion that 'the existing political and economic order of things' was to be blamed for the mob violence against the Jews. Their solidarity deeply impressed Chudnovskii and solidified his faith in the Russian revolutionary movement and its socialist goals of universal emancipation.

As in 1871, the pogroms of 1881–82 ultimately had the same effect on Jewish socialists. They were gratified that the majority of their comrades responded to their disapproval of extremist anti-Jewish declarations designed to fuel a 'pogrom-rebellion'. In the end, the pogrom crisis actually cleansed the movement of its anti-Jewish prejudices, with the result that after 1884 it was no longer in good taste to greet popular antisemitic outbursts as manifestations of the 'people's' revolutionary temperament. As for Jewish radicals themselves, the pogroms heightened their sense of Jewish self-awareness and made them more sensitive to the suffering of their 'own race', which, in turn, drew them even closer to the revolutionary movement as the only alternative route to win Jewish political and social emancipation in Russia.

11 Epigones and pioneers

The assassination of Alexander II on 1 March 1881 marked the beginning of the end of Narodnaia Volia. Too weak in numbers and lacking in popular support, the party was unable to exploit its apparent success. Naively expecting a spontaneous revolt of the masses or, at the very least, a government sufficiently frightened to submit to constitutional demands, the Narodovoltsy had no programme in place to cope with post-March developments which neither fulfilled their expectations nor strengthened their party. As a matter of fact, within two years from its pyrrhic victory, Narodnaia Volia ceased to exist as an organized party. After 1882 it came to consist of people who felt attached to its tradition and sought to revive its political fortunes periodically. As a movement, however, Narodnaia Volia survived until 1887, though its body, still twitching with signs of life, was laid to rest only several years later.¹

That the years following the assassination of Alexander II have properly been seen as Narodnaia Volia's 'period of decline' must not, however, blind us to the historical significance of its continuous, albeit uncoordinated and less spectacular, revolutionary activity in the 1880s. Clearly, the Narodovoltsy of this decade operated under different conditions than their more famous predecessors. Jolted into action by the deadly attack of 1 March 1881, the government of Alexander III waged an uncompromising and sustained war against the revolutionaries and anyone it suspected as being 'politically unreliable'. The vigilant police spun a net of informers and *provocateurs* around the movement and society in general which allowed no opportunity to repeat the Natanson experiment of the mid-1870s – the recreation of a functionally structured and hierarchically organized all-Russian party. Indeed the repressive environment of the new decade made it impossible for even the most determined and talented Narodovoltsy to fashion large organizations for any length of time. Nonetheless they made up a movement that was full of vitality and enjoyed a following which in numbers surpassed that of the old Narodnaia Volia. In fact, as a collection of dispersed and loosely connected circles, the new generation of Narodovoltsy fulfilled an

important transitional role in Russian revolutionary history: they preserved its continuity. In their efforts to emulate the 'heroic tradition' of Narodnaia Volia, they became the pioneers of a new era of revolutionary politics, which, in the late 1890s, gave rise to the Party of Socialist-Revolutionaries (PSR) and the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party (RSDWP).

How and why was Narodnaia Volia able to survive for so long and keep alive the spectre of revolution until the time was ripe for other parties to continue the struggle on a much more massive scale? Repression was undoubtedly one of the reasons. By prohibiting student organizations or societies, the authorities inadvertently politicized harmless social activities – thus driving the 'studying youth' into the arms of radical-minded activists. As we shall see, many of these students and activists were Jews who, more than anyone else, suffered from the reactionary policies of Alexander III's government which undermined any hope for Jewish emancipation in Russia.

Another reason that kept Narodnaia Volia afloat, despite the virtual elimination of its erstwhile leadership, was its tremendous prestige from having challenged the autocratic state by eliminating the autocrat in person. Paradoxically, at no point in its history did the name Narodnaia Volia attract more attention than in the aftermath of the March assassination. Again, this was particularly true for Jewish youngsters who in 1881–82 flocked to the standards of a party that had heroically proven its commitment to political liberty in the name of socialist ideals.

Finally, the very absence of a central leadership in the form of an Executive Committee was as important, if not more so, for the survival of Narodnaia Volia than government policy and revolutionary prestige. Functioning more as 'the symbolic focus for a dispersed and only hazily defined movement than as a revolutionary party', Narodnaia Volia was much less vulnerable to destruction than would have been the case with a centrally structured organization.² Actually, the decentralized and autonomous nature of revolutionary practice after 1882 not only diminished this danger but also facilitated the growth of the movement in the provinces, the so-called peripheral areas of Narodnaia Volia's activity. Figuratively and literally, the 'periphery' replaced the 'centre'. In this sense, the decline of Narodnaia Volia was less a phenomenon of disintegration than of dispersion: namely, the spreading of the revolutionary virus into areas hitherto largely immune to the 'nihilist disease'. Since this 'disease' was often blamed on the Jews as one of the principal carriers of the revolutionary virus, let us examine their role in this final chapter of revolutionary Populism.

The vicissitudes which led to the destruction of the Executive Committee in 1881–82 need not detain us unduly. But the period itself is of some interest because it inaugurates Narodnaia Volia's transformation from a tightly knit organization into an amorphous movement which sets the stage for 'the shift from the centre to the periphery'.³ Also, and significantly so from the point of view of Jewish participation, there is a corresponding shift of Narodovoltsy activity from the North to the South of the Russian empire. This shift is directly related to the entry of a new, 'second generation' of Jews into radical politics. They join Narodnaia Volia shortly after the First of March, absolve their revolutionary apprenticeship in St Petersburg, and then relocate in the South due to the government's efficient suppression of the movement in the North. Following this progression of their revolutionary lives, St Petersburg is the obvious place to begin the tale of the 'epigones and pioneers' of the 1880s.

The most prominent Narodovoltsy to remain in St Petersburg after the nearly decimated Executive Committee moved to Moscow in April to escape total annihilation were Savelii Zlatopolskii and Khristina Grinberg (1857–1942). Comrades-in-arms since their early days in Nikolaev's radical Jewish community, they maintained the party's presence in the capital: Zlatopolskii as the Executive's sole representative; Grinberg as its principal agent. As a team, they embodied its organization in St Petersburg: they kept the underground operational and preserved the party's influence in circles sympathetic to its cause.⁴

Besides being popular in the radical student movement, they were very well equipped to meet the challenge of safeguarding the organization in an environment that was under intense police surveillance. Zlatopolskii was especially suited for this task. As an experienced conspirator, he went about his business without attracting the attention of the police and exposing the circles entrusted to his care; as a talented organizer and able agitator, he was himself very active in these circles consolidating their organization and recruiting new members. This was particularly evident in the case of Narodnaia Volia's military circles, which during Zlatopolskii's 'reign' entered their 'period of bloom'.⁵

For all his conspiratorial skills and his reputation as the party's specialist in underground operations, Zlatopolskii was least successful where it mattered most – protecting the organization against the police. A poor judge of men, Zlatopolskii made the mistake of relying on the Degaev brothers, Vladimir and Sergei, to counteract the brilliant and ultimately successful police infiltration of Narodnaia Volia orchestrated by Colonel G. D. Sudeikin of the Okhranka. While Vladimir proved to be a liability due to his incredible naivety, Sergei revealed himself as a scrupulously ambitious individual who played the role of a double agent

to advance his own fortunes within the party. Deceiving both the revolutionaries and the police, he used his position as Zlatopolskii's trusted 'counter-agent' to play his own game of betrayal: namely, to make himself the leader of Narodnaia Volia by cooperating with Sudeikin in arresting its leading activists. Hence the origins of *Degaevshchina*, which in 1883 led to the complete dismantling of Narodnaia Volia.⁶

Yet, it would be wrong to assess Zlatopolskii's performance during 1881–82 solely in the light of what happened in 1883. Over all, Zlatopolskii's activity probably contributed more to the survival of Narodnaia Volia than to its destruction. In the short term, he preserved its organization in St Petersburg; in the long term, he ensured its continuity as a movement. The latter was very much a result of his work in recruiting new members for Narodnaia Volia and mobilizing the radical student community for its cause.

For a whole year, until his arrest in April 1882, he and Khristina Grinberg were in constant touch with a network of student circles which supplied Narodnaia Volia with new recruits and generally supported the party politically and materially. For instance, Aleksandr Pribylev, a medical student and sympathizer with Narodnaia Volia prior to March 1881, relates in his memoirs that he often met Zlatopolskii and that his own future role as the party's 'technical worker' owed much to this 'untiring worker of the revolution'.⁷

Even more to the point, Zlatopolskii and Grinberg convinced Pribylev, in March 1882, to organize a new 'technical workshop' for producing dynamite. They also supplied the prospective 'host' of the dynamite shop with an ideal 'hostess' – the Jewess Roza (Raisa) Lvovna Grosman (1857?–1900). Their 'fictitious marriage' soon turned real in the close and intimate setting of their own creation: the *dinamitnaia masterskaia* which they operated in May–June 1882 with 'the general aim of forming a technical party group ... and the much more concrete goal of attempting to spread terror in this era of Sudeikin'. But, alas, Sudeikin proved too much of a challenge. Already in June 1882 he closed down their dynamite shop and arrested the entire leadership of the St Petersburg organization.⁸

Aleksandr Pribylev and Roza Grosman were typical of 'second generation' Narodovoltsy who joined the party after its near destruction in March 1881. In following Zlatopolskii's call of duty to help the party in its dire hour of need, Grosman was one of numerous 'soldiers' of Jewish origin who enlisted in 1881–82, and who later on became the 'quartermasters' and 'generals' of the revolutionary army. They belonged to that cohort of Jewish students who entered St Petersburg post-secondary schools in the late 1870s. Their pattern of radicalization was

remarkably similar to the experiences of Jewish students who had undergone this revolutionary process a decade earlier. As in the case of Anna Epshtein and Mark Natanson, and the Jewish student activists of 1869–71 in general, their background and education conformed strikingly to the revolutionizing formula – maskilic upbringing, ‘self-education’ in gymnasium circles, and entry into the revolutionary movement while studying ‘useful professions’ to be of service to ‘the people’.

A good illustration of this is the career of Roza Fedorovna Frank (1861–1922), who during Grosman’s student days was ‘the central figure’ among St Petersburg female students, the so-called *kursistki*. The daughter of a progressive-minded Jewish merchant in Kamenets-Podolsk, and a graduate of its local gymnasium, Roza Frank had come to the capital in 1879 to enroll in the *Bestuzhevskie kursy*, a programme of courses specially designed for women in the field of medicine and public health. Intelligent, mature, extremely likeable, and already radically minded, Frank attracted many fellow students sympathetic to the revolutionary cause.⁹ Most notable among these were: Praskovia Bogoraz (1861–85), Genrietta Dobruskina (1862–193?), and Runia (Raisa) Krantsfeld (1859–?) – all three of whom would eventually be active in the South of Russia. Quickly moving beyond mere lip service to the idea of revolution, they began to practise their convictions by collecting money and performing other valuable subsidiary services for Narodnaia Volia. By 1880–81 Roza Frank and companions had become part of that network of peripheral circles which sustained Narodnaia Volia in St Petersburg, and which assured its survival thereafter.

What Roza Frank did for the revolution among the *kursistki*, Lev Kogan-Bernshtein (1862–89) accomplished among university students. Although his revolutionary career was interrupted in 1881 by five years of Siberian exile, his prior two years of work earned him the admiration of fellow students as a fearless and talented agitator of socialism and organizer of Narodovoltsy circles. Many prominent Jewish activists who carried the torch of revolution to southern Russia in the mid-eighties owed their inspiration to him, among them Praskovia’s brother Natan and his friends Moisei Krol and Lev Shternberg. For them Bernshtein was the last way station to becoming full-fledged Narodovoltsy.

As students of St Petersburg University, they encountered Bernshtein as the leading activist of the Central University circle. The formation of this circle in 1880 was a direct result of his effort to create an organization that would ‘unite the revolutionary students’ and link them to the ‘centre’ of Narodnaia Volia – the Executive Committee.¹⁰ But the circle’s mandate was not restricted to these tasks only. Under the patronage of

Andrei Zheliabov and Sofia Perovskaia, the circle formed a group for conducting propaganda among workers. This was the core of Narodnaia Volia's Workers' Section, whose principal activist was, once again, Kogan-Bernshtein. With five other comrades he organized several groups of workers in the fall of 1880 and participated in teaching them the ABCs of socialism.¹¹

This pioneering activity continued on a regular basis until February 1881, when Kogan-Bernshtein was forced to leave St Petersburg due to his public appearance at a festive university gathering where he castigated the government for its repressive policies and prophesied that soon violence will be answered by violence. The meeting boiled over into a noisy and turbulent demonstration. In the general turmoil Bernshtein managed to slip away and go into hiding at Helfman's conspiratorial quarters, where just then bombs were being readied for the attack on Alexander II.¹²

In the memoirs of Natan Bogoraz and others the name of Kogan-Bernshtein ranks side by side with the momentous March event as a reminder of how the February demonstration put them in a state of revolutionary expectation that was vindicated three weeks later.¹³ For many radicals, especially Jewish ones, Bernshtein offered a perfect example of revolutionary commitment, a sort of role model, they sought to emulate after the First of March. Indeed, this was their point of entry into Narodnaia Volia.

Thus soon after March 1881 we find Bernshtein's university students and Frank's *kursistki* actively supporting the efforts of Zlatopolskii to preserve the party in St Petersburg. Particularly outstanding in this respect were Dobruskina and Frank herself. Until Zlatopolskii's arrest in April 1882, they conveyed his 'messages' to the student movement and organized their own following into Narodnaia Volia support groups. Thereafter they joined up with Petr Iakubovich in forming a new organization in the winter of 1882–83, the 'central group' of so-called 'Young Narodovoltsy'. In this new setting, Genrieta Dobruskina followed the footsteps of Bernshtein. She became active in workers' propaganda as a participant in the Preparatory Group of the Party of Narodnaia Volia, which was but the new name for the Workers' Section that had fallen into abeyance for almost a year after Bernshtein's departure from St Petersburg in February 1881.¹⁴

While Dobruskina was busy propagandizing workers in places as far apart as St Petersburg and Belostok (she even went to Warsaw, helping the Polish socialist party Proletariat to set up a printing press and establish links with Belostok workers' circles), her fellow *kursistki* Roza Frank and Praskovia Bogoraz made themselves indispensable in the

operations of the 'central group'. As 'Iakubovich's girl' – literally in his private life, and figuratively in party affairs – Roza helped him in one of the group's major projects: the creation of a new underground press to renew the publication of Narodnaia Volia literature that had been interrupted since the dismantling of the party's Moscow press in June 1882. This was accomplished in October 1883 when Mikhail Shebalin and Bogoraz began to operate a secret printing press. With the help of two more workers, the Shebalin–Bogoraz team put Narodnaia Volia back into the public eye, churning out thousands of leaflets, pamphlets, and brochures between June and October 1883.¹⁵

The authorities never had any knowledge of the whereabouts of the press. Its location was well chosen, and its 'proprietors' were very astute in covering up the true purpose of their 'bourgeois existence'.¹⁶ Nonetheless, the press was scuttled in November. Its staff left St Petersburg for Moscow, and shortly thereafter set up a new press in Kiev. The move was made in anticipation of Sudeikin's assassination – to be executed by none other than his erstwhile collaborator Sergei Degaev, who had been the 'connecting link' between the Shebalin–Bogoraz press and Iakubovich's organization.

Six weeks later, on 16 December 1883, Sudeikin was murdered. Although this terrorist killing had been engineered by the Paris Executive Committee, Iakubovich's group was indirectly involved through Degaev, who relied on it for 'logistical support'. Roza Frank recommended the actual assassins to him, and the planning of the killing took place in a conspiratorial quarter set up for this purpose by Runia Krantsfeld. After beating Sudeikin to death with an iron bar, the assassins returned to the Krantsfeld hide-out and printed a proclamation about their gruesome feat. The content of the proclamation gave no indication, however, that the murder signified the end of the *Degaevshchina*, which in itself 'ended the history of the party' as an organized entity.¹⁷

While the organizational cohesion of Narodnaia Volia had been eroding since March 1881, the treachery of Degaev was its *coup de grâce*. The secretive handling of the whole Degaev affair by the Paris Executive Committee, which had known about the provocation for months without informing its 'soldiers in the field', led to a breakdown of its authority in Russia. Already for some time dissatisfied with the Committee's continuous reliance on futile terrorist ventures and out-moded centralized organization to bring about a revolution, the St Petersburg Narodovoltsy finally decided to go their own way. Led by Iakubovich, they organized themselves into a 'new party', the Union of Youth of Narodnaia Volia, which sought to deemphasize the politics of terrorism and centralism by encouraging autonomous and decentralized activity by

local circles engaged in propagandizing workers and peasants. The Union was joined by a fair number of Jewish students, in part because their compatriots – Frank and Dobruskina – had been intimately involved in its creation.

The Union of ‘young Narodovoltsy’ lasted only until November 1884, when Iakubovich and Frank were arrested in the streets of St Petersburg. Ironically, their capture, as well as that of 500 other Narodovoltsy was due to German Lopatin, who had begun to create a new centralist organization with the help of Iakubovich in the form of an ‘administrative commission’ made up of ‘Young’ and ‘Old’ Narodovoltsy. Carrying with him a ‘register’ of revolutionaries active in thirty-one ‘centres’ throughout Russia for the purpose of resuscitating the old party, he was arrested on 4 October 1884 with his list of names being seized by the police. The consequences were as devastating as those of the *Degaevshchina* – and, in fact, destroyed the men and women who together with Iakubovich had sought to make a new beginning.¹⁸

There remained a few Unionists, however, who somehow survived the catastrophe. These were largely Jewish students and *kursistki*, the most prominent being Moisei Vasilevich Bramson (1862–193?), Abram Maksimovich Magat, his sister Saia, and her girl friend and fellow *kursistka* Mina Markovna Zalkind (1864–1932). In October 1885 they tried to revive the Union at a gathering attended almost exclusively by Jewish Narodovoltsy. After discussing Bramson’s draft programme, they agreed to form ‘the central circle of the “Union of Youth”’.¹⁹ Unfortunately, the organization lasted for only three months. Though it had made a promising beginning in consolidating its membership, building an operational printing press, and establishing links with Vilna radicals and so-called ‘military circles’, the police caught up with the Unionist epigones in December 1885.²⁰

As if to signify the prominence of Jewish activists in the St Petersburg movement, especially after Iakubovich’s disappearance in November 1884, the disintegration of Bramson’s group coincided with, and partially contributed to, the virtual collapse of any sustained organized activity by Narodnaia Volia in the capital – except, that is, for some sporadic efforts associated with Lenin’s older brother, Aleksandr Ulianov, who attempted to assassinate Alexander III in 1887, and Sofia Ginsburg’s ill-fated venture in 1888–89 to breathe new life into the decaying body of Narodnaia Volia. However, all this, including the Union, was merely an afterglow of the revolutionary fire in northern Russia. Its hearth had long ago been abandoned by many who found in south-western Russia better places to keep the flickering light of revolution from being prematurely extinguished.

As noted already, Narodnaia Volia had ceased to exist as a unified party in 1882–83. The massive arrests of summer 1882, which destroyed Zlatopolskii's St Petersburg organization and also forced the members of the Moscow Executive to seek refuge abroad, deprived the movement of its centralized leadership. Attempts by Vera Figner (the sole remaining member of the old Executive Committee in Russia until her arrest in February 1883), Petr Iakubovich, and German Lopatin to resurrect the party were doomed by Sergei Degaev and the revolutionaries' own ineptitude. That Narodnaia Volia survived as a movement until the late 1880s was due to the proliferation of groups which arose in 1882–85 and operated independently in their respective locales in much the same fashion as Iakubovich's 'Young Narodovoltsy'. However, after 1883, these locales coincided with the provincial cities, university towns, and industrial areas of south-western Russia rather than with the traditional centres in the North. True, Moscow and St Petersburg continued to function on a reduced scale as 'powerhouses of revolution'. But the centre of gravity had definitely shifted to the periphery in the mid-1880s. And since this periphery also coincided with areas most densely populated by Jews (roughly comprising the Pale of Settlement and New Russia) it comes as no surprise that Jewish radicals were predestined to play a much more prominent role in the revolutionary movement than previously.

Actually, the movement that persisted between 1883 and 1887 can be seen as both the cause and effect of greater Jewish revolutionary involvement in the eighties. A graphic illustration of this is the fact that Jewish activists were in the forefront of those who were forced to leave St Petersburg in 1880–83 due to the authorities' effective crackdown on the capital's radical community. Having undergone their revolutionary *bar mitzvah* while studying in St Petersburg, which usually led at least to one arrest and a term of imprisonment, they returned home to Minsk, Vilna, Kiev, Taganrog, or Odessa, often as expelled students subject to domiciliary exile. Here they resumed their subversive work together with local Jewish radicals who, like themselves, had served their revolutionary apprenticeship as gymnasium and/or university students. Working in a familiar terrain that in towns like Minsk and Taganrog was still poorly policed, these individuals were for some time relatively free to propagate socialism and organize circles which were often predominantly Jewish in composition. Their Jewishness, as well as their ability to operate in 'native' surroundings, made for easy contacts with Jewish *intelligenty* and workers. The net effect of all this was that although the centralized party was destroyed in 1881–82, new provincial centres of revolutionary

subversion were constantly and autochthonously recreated by Jewish Narodovoltsy in 1883–87.

The shifting nature of Narodnaia Volia activity, both in terms of geography and decentralization, therefore, enhanced rather than diminished the Jewish presence in the revolutionary movement. The traditional excellence of Jews in the less glamorous areas of painstaking conspiratorial work was now more in demand and of even greater importance in maintaining the movement than in the heyday of Zemlia i Volia and Narodnaia Volia. The new conditions were conducive to the display of Jewish talent in organizing circles, building printing presses, manning conspiratorial quarters, and propagating socialism in an urban environment. In this respect the mid-1880s, although ushering in the end of Narodnaia Volia, brought out sharply the salient features of Jewish revolutionary involvement. Now, as it were, the shadows of decline revealed more accurately the silhouettes of the movement's Jewish component.

In setting the *leitmotif* for these final years of Jewish activity in Narodnaia Volia, let us turn to Natan Mendeleovich Bogoraz (1865–1936) – better known as Vladimir Tan-Bogoraz, the famous anthropologist. Accompanying his older sister to St Petersburg in 1880, he also followed Praskovia's revolutionary example by being drawn into the Narodovoltsy student movement via Kogan-Bernshtein's Central University circle. Busy attending agitational meetings (*skhodki*) throughout 1881–82, he was finally arrested in November 1882 for participating in a major wave of student unrest. After several days' detention, he was expelled from St Petersburg University and banished to his home town Taganrog. Forced to leave also were his fellow students Lev Shternberg and Moisei Krol, the 'Odessans', who joined him later on in founding 'the last union of "Narodnaia Volia"'.²¹ For the present they went separate ways: Krol and Shternberg to their native Zhitomir (and shortly thereafter to Odessa), and Bogoraz to Taganrog.

Back in Taganrog, Bogoraz immediately applied what he had learned in St Petersburg. Together with local activists he organized a 'central circle' for coordinating and intensifying revolutionary propaganda among the city's intelligentsia and especially its rapidly growing industrial proletariat. Relations with workers, mostly employees of a newly established metal factory, were excellent and augured well for good results in politicizing them through education and agitation. Addressing the workers' economic hardship and organizing strikes was thought to be the most effective means for achieving this goal. However, the strike project never went beyond the planning stage because on 17 June 1883 Bogoraz was arrested on account of his connections with other

revolutionary circles in Rostov and Odessa. Fortunately, this mishap did not affect the Taganrog organization as a whole. When Bogoraz returned two years later he found his old circle still intact and in possession of sufficient manpower and material resources to allow for the construction of an illegal printing press, which one historian has described as 'the most sophisticated underground printing operation in Narodnaia Volia's history'.²²

Taganrog and Bogoraz in 1882–83 is indicative of what occurred in Minsk, Kharkov, Rostov-on-Don, Kiev, Elizavetgrad, Ekaterinoslav, Odessa, and other towns and cities of western and south-western Russia. Although some of these places, especially Kiev, Kharkov, and Odessa, suffered from the disastrous consequences of the *Degaevshchina* in 1883 and the Lopatin débâcle a year later, the organizational and propagandist efforts of people like Bogoraz were never completely undone. On the contrary, the fruits of their labour kept Narodnaia Volia subsisting throughout the 1880s and even survived the movement in the form of numerous workers' circles which turned social-democratic in the 1890s.²³ Their intensive cultivation of socialism in a workers' environment necessitated and created an underground infrastructure – the means of producing, storing, and distributing illegal literature, and of providing activists with secret hide-outs, forged identity papers, and address directories for keeping in contact with one another – that was resilient enough to enable the Narodovoltsy time and again to resurrect circles and 'centres' after each successive wave of persecution.

For the post-*Degaevshchina* period this Jewish contribution is vividly demonstrated by Abram Litmanovich Bakh (1857–1946), who in 1884 emerged as one of Narodnaia Volia's dominant figures in southern Russia. He exemplifies the leading role of Jews in the movement in the mid-1880s, and, above all else, their ingenuity in utilizing its meagre local resources to recreate centres of organized revolutionary activity.²⁴

In February 1884, Bakh had gone to St Petersburg to reestablish links which had been severed during *Degaevshchina*, and to plan for future action. He arrived just in time to play a constructive role in the negotiations between Iakubovich and Lopatin, thus facilitating the reunification of the 'Young' and 'Old' Narodovoltsy. Having done his share to forge a working relationship between the two factions by setting up an 'administrative commission', Bakh was entrusted to assume with Sergei Ivanov 'the management of revolutionary work in the South' and the implementation of the party's 'foremost goal of establishing a secret printing press' to publish overdue issues of its journal *Narodnaia Volia*.²⁵

Bakh decided that Rostov-on-Don was the best location for organizing the new 'central press'. Here, already prior to his St Petersburg trip, he

had discovered – and indeed furthered – conditions which were ideal for his work of reconstruction. Although its local activists were disorganized they included some workers and were excellent material to build up an organization that could sustain the technical apparatus connected with the planned printing of the tenth issue of *Narodnaia Volia*. Equally important was the fact that these activists had been able to operate without much police interference and therefore were in a ‘legal position’ to pursue their illegal endeavours. Rostov, in other words, was still a haven for revolutionaries since the police had not the slightest idea of ‘what went on below the surface of its commercial-industrial life’.²⁶

Once things had been settled in St Petersburg, Bakh returned to Rostov in April 1884 and immediately applied himself to the task of building the party press. Still in St Petersburg he had arranged to fill the position of manager in the printing establishment with the most ‘experienced candidate’ for the job – Raisa Krantsfeld. Recalling their first meeting, Bakh characterized her personality and future role in words reminiscent of Helfman:

Arriving at the meeting, I saw a feeble and pallid young woman whose appearance seemed fairly colourless at first sight. But beneath this colourless, somewhat intentionally projected exterior [she] concealed a rare self-control and presence of mind. And it was only thanks to these qualities that our Rostov press was not destroyed due to very awkward and unexpected events.

Later, already in Rostov, an ideal Gentile ‘husband’ – for life, as it turned out – was found in Zakhar Vasilev to match *khaziaika* with *khaziain*. Together they turned out the tenth issue of *Narodnaia Volia* in the summer of 1884.²⁷

By locating the ‘party press’ in Rostov the city had developed into a new centre of revolutionary activity in southern Russia. Throughout the summer and fall of 1884 it was, as one police official correctly observed, ‘frequented by all active anarchists’.²⁸ Among those who stayed on was Genrieta Dobruskina. In joining the ‘central group’, she contributed greatly to the work of its already well-established workers’ section. Together with Bakh, she selected and prepared the reading material (Marx’s *Communist Manifesto* and a popular rendering of his *Capital*, as well as Bakh’s own hectographed lectures ‘Tsar-Hunger’), which they and local propagandists used to good effect in giving workers a political education.

Concurrently, Dobruskina also took part in preparing new terrorist attacks against high-ranking government officials. The principal targets were the Minister of Interior, Count Dmitrii Tolstoi, and the chief of police, Viacheslav Pleve. Dobruskina’s living quarters served as a place

for assembling the bombs to be used against them. This activity, together with workers' propaganda and the operation of the printing press in particular, had made Rostov 'a very boisterous terminal' indeed for revolutionary subversion in the South – a showpiece, as it were, for many Narodovoltsy in the region, who viewed the Bakh organization as a new beginning and readily acknowledged its leadership.²⁹

The illusion that the movement was on its way to becoming again a unified party was soon shattered, however. Even before Bakh and Ivanov were able to regularize 'the most rudimentary ties between outlying localities', these tenuous connections were torn asunder as a result of Lopatin's arrest in October 1884.³⁰ Already in July Rostov had ceased to be an oasis of undisturbed revolutionary work due to the apprehension of a workers' circle led by Iosif Peisakhovich Veinberg, a very competent Jewish propagandist and organizer in Bakh's group. The Lopatin débâcle then led to the disintegration of the new organizational nucleus of Narodnaia Volia in southern Russia. One of the first victims of the 'terrible catastrophe' was Dobruskina, who along with many others was listed in Lopatin's 'address book' of Narodovoltsy activists.³¹

Miraculously, Bakh and Krantsfeld eluded the police even while they were still removing the press to safety and storing away its finished products. Going 'deep underground' they were able to cover up their tracks and thus remained beyond the reach of the authorities. Yet, instead of continuing their revolutionary career, they took stock of what had happened and came to the conclusion that, in Bakh's words, 'Narodnaia Volia had outlived its era'. Krantsfeld settled down in marital bliss with her erstwhile companion of the printing press establishment; and Bakh emigrated abroad in March 1885, having lost all hope that there was any future for Narodnaia Volia in spite of the fact that the movement had still 'potential reserves in the South'.³² The mobilization of these reserves constituted the last-ditch effort of primarily Jewish Narodovoltsy who, although known to the police, eluded their persecutors for another couple of years.

The principal actors in the final act of Narodnaia Volia were Natan Bogoraz, Boris Orzhikh, and Lev Shternberg. The latter was the leading activist among the Narodovoltsy in Odessa until his arrest in April 1886. He and his comrade Moisei Krol were mainly responsible for rejuvenating the battered Odessa movement in the wake of the Lopatin disaster. Already active in Odessa prior to this event, they had laid the groundwork for the beginning of a new Odessa organization which became an important component in Orzhikh's and Bogoraz's attempt to reconstitute Narodnaia Volia in 1885–86.³³

Like Natan Bogoraz they had undergone their revolutionary baptism – arrest, detention, and domiciliary exile – in St Petersburg by participating in Narodovoltsy student circles, with Lev Shternberg occupying a ‘prominent position’ due to his ‘great organizational talent and immense energy’. Displaying the same qualities in Odessa, Shternberg became the ‘soul’ of a large circle of Narodovoltsy which he and Krol had organized within several weeks of their enrolment at Odessa’s University of New Russia in the fall of 1883. Almost all its members were Jewish activists whose revolutionary initiation had taken place while studying in St Petersburg. The aim of the Shternberg group was to consolidate and expand the radical Odessa community, so that it could serve as a base for resuming political terrorism and workers’ propaganda. To achieve this they were to concentrate on building up an organizational infrastructure and initiating workers’ circles as well as contacting existing ones.³⁴

Shternberg for his part set himself the task of infusing a note of optimism and a sense of direction into the generally demoralized state of affairs caused by the *Degaevshchina*. Unaffected by the pessimistic mood of his comrades, Shternberg gave expression to his favourite battle-cry, ‘the God of Israel is alive!’ (*Zhiv bog Izrailia!*) by writing his influential brochure ‘Political Terror in Russia 1884’.³⁵ Composed in a spirit very reminiscent of Zundelevich’s 1879 pro-terrorist argument, Shternberg advocated systematic terrorism to achieve ‘the principal and final goal of the party – the attainment of free political institutions, which would give to all progressive parties the possibility to deploy their forces for the general welfare of the people’. As Shternberg explained, in Russia, unlike Western Europe, there was no other way for political dissenters to change the system except by terrorism. Autocratic despotism would have to be answered with revolutionary terror since neither the peasantry nor the proletariat could be expected to fight for political liberty on their own. Only ‘the systematic killing of the tsar and the most important, the most outspoken, enemies of the people and the intelligentsia’ would bring liberty and ensure its durability. Although at times written in a convoluted style, Shternberg’s essay offered a cogent and convincing argument to the revolutionary community of why under present circumstances terror was the ‘only form of struggle’ possible against autocracy. The brochure, hectographed and distributed by Shternberg’s circle, was quickly brought to the attention of Narodovoltsy groups throughout Russia and, in the words of Moisei Krol, ‘produced a very strong impression by its freshness of thought, vigour of tone, and effusion of revolutionary fervour’.³⁶ One of those who were particularly impressed was Boris Dmitrievich Orzhikh (1864–19?).

Unlike Shternberg and the radicals who congregated around him,

Boris Orzhikh was a 'home-grown' Odessa revolutionary. In many ways he was typical of the 'second generation' of Jews who were radicalized in Odessa. Belonging to an already highly acculturated and politically conscious stratum of Odessa Jewry, he acquired his revolutionary ideas at gymnasium – following, as it were, the footsteps of his elder sister Sofia Dimitrievna. Sophia was his role model, and it was she who introduced him to revolutionary politics which, as we know, she practised as a member of the Lion circle and participant of the momentous 1878 Odessa demonstration in defence of Ivan Kovalskii.³⁷ His own eventful career began in earnest when he entered university in the fall of 1882.

Here, at the University of New Russia, he met the *crème de la crème* of local radicals: Pavel Annenkov, Vasilii Sukhomlin, Iakov Barskii, Ekaterina and Dora Tetelman, Anna Galperin, Mark Peises (Pesis), and Iakov Frenkel – all of whom, except for the first two, were Jewish students.³⁸ Under the leadership of Sukhomlin they had formed the Central Odessa Party Group, whose rank and file reflected the Jewish complexion of its leading activists.

Continuing the tradition which had begun with Solomon Chudnovskii, Jews thus completely dominated the technical and organizational work of the Odessa group. Outstanding in this respect were Iakov Frenkel, Lazar Solomonovich Shlemenzon, and Iakov Andreevich Barskii. They managed the group's printing presses, passport agency, and communication network. The latter was particularly vital for regularizing relations with a multitude of student and workers' circles.

It was via these circles that Orzhikh entered the Central Odessa Group in late 1882, and immediately made himself a name as able agitator and organizer. His rise in the local revolutionary hierarchy was completed in the fall of 1883 when, together with Samuil Feldman, he formed his own circle of university students for propagandizing workers and organizing transports of illegal literature across the Austro-Russian frontier in Galicia.³⁹

Weathering repeated waves of arrests which engulfed the Odessa movement throughout 1882–84, Jewish activists like Orzhikh can be credited with keeping the Central Party Group afloat until the fall of 1884 when local mishaps, compounded by the Lopatin débâcle, led to its destruction and the imprisonment of its leading personalities: Sukhomlin, Galperin, Shlemenzon, and Barskii. As for Orzhikh, fortune was on his side. Busy organizing a transport route through Podolia, he had been away from Odessa when the first large-scale police crackdown of August 1884 signalled the beginning of the end of the Sukhomlin organization, and most immediately destroyed his own circle. Forewarned by his comrades, Orzhikh went into hiding on his return to

Odessa. Assuming a new persona he became an 'illegal' and soon left his home town in search of revolutionary groupings elsewhere in Russia to keep alive 'the spirit of fighting despotism for *political liberty*'.⁴⁰

Throughout the fall and winter of 1884–85, Orzhikh travelled extensively to seek out pockets of revolutionary resistance which had survived the Lopatin-related police raids of the previous month. It was then that he met Natan Bogoraz who, in March 1885, had returned to Taganrog after almost two years of exile. Having already had contacts with the Taganrog circle previously, Orzhikh was extremely impressed when he actually encountered its original founder – so much so that he christened him 'Natan the Wise'. Spending a couple of days together, they were mutually drawn to one another, each admiring the other's qualities: Bogoraz valued the organizer, the *praktik*, in Orzhikh; and Orzhikh the theoretician, propagandist, and writer in Bogoraz. Anxious to give his work a larger scope than was possible in Taganrog, Bogoraz completely agreed with Orzhikh's plans for the future. Orzhikh, in turn, knew that in Bogoraz he had found the person to realize these plans – the foremost of which, in his mind, was to bring out a new issue of *Narodnaia Volia* to show the faithful and enemies alike that the 'party' was still in existence.⁴¹ In short, the two proved to be a perfect team to create and lead what was to become the South-Russian Narodovoltsy Organization.

In the meantime, Orzhikh had also found a valuable ally in Shternberg, whose organizational abilities matched his own and whose reasoned advocacy of political terrorism did much to drum up support for continuing the seemingly hopeless struggle against tsarism. This was particularly true of Odessa, where Shternberg and his St Petersburg retinue – Krol, Vulfovich, Portugalov, and others – resumed revolutionary activity just when it appeared that everything was doomed at the end of 1884. They had survived the wholesale destruction of Sukhomlin's Central Group because they had not been directly connected with it and, therefore, their names had not been entered in Lopatin's incriminating 'register'. Hence, while the local authorities lulled themselves into believing that they had finally wiped out the 'nihilist disease', Shternberg did his best to keep it alive and ensure its nourishment by reviving his old St Petersburg connections and establishing links with radicals in Moscow and Kharkov.

In fact, it was in Kharkov that the two met sometime in June or July 1885. Orzhikh warmly endorsed Shternberg's all-Russian organizational efforts and convinced him there and then to pool resources. On this occasion they also agreed that after Shternberg's return from St Petersburg they would call a congress of southern Narodovoltsy in Ekaterinoslav to constitute formally a new organization.

In the summer of 1885, while Shternberg travelled around Russia making new contacts, Bogoraz and Orzhikh worked closely together in giving the movement in the South a clear organizational focus with a sound technical infrastructure. In addition to Orzhikh's printing press in Novocherkassk, operated by Zakharii Kogan,⁴² it was decided to set up another one in Taganrog in order to handle a larger volume of pamphlets and books. The quarters of the Taganrog press were also used for storing explosives in the expectation of resuming as soon as possible terrorist attacks against the government. Located in Taganrog as well was the group's 'passport bureau' where Orzhikh and Bogoraz developed a new system of codification, replacing Lev Zlatopolskii's which had long since been cracked by the police.⁴³ Aside from this technical work, the two recruited activists, especially in Rostov, Taganrog, Novocherkassk, and Ekaterinoslav.

All these cities were in close proximity to one another, none more than one-and-a-half hours apart by rail. This was ideal for Orzhikh and Bogoraz in that they were able to shuttle back and forth with relative ease. It was natural, therefore, that, as Orzhikh said, these 'points were to constitute the basis for extensive revolutionary work'. Moreover, this geographical advantage was enhanced by the presence of many Jewish activists and sympathizers in an area which was heavily populated by Jews, in particular workers who were anything but pleased with their place in Russian society. It was for these reasons that, in Bogoraz's words, Ekaterinoslav became 'the centre of our organization from the very beginning'.⁴⁴

Orzhikh had discovered from early on that Ekaterinoslav, although a town of only 35,000, was ideally suited for revolutionary work. Its police force lacked experience in dealing with socialist subversion and was generally good-natured to the point of turning a blind eye on the strange doings of the local intelligentsia. Thus, when Orzhikh made his first 'exploratory visit' in January 1885, he was pleasantly surprised to find a group of workers with a highly developed 'revolutionary consciousness' that had been fostered by a small circle of Jewish *intelligenty* since 1884. Quickly sizing up the situation, he decided to reinforce the local activists – the most prominent being Mikhail Moiseevich Poliakov, Rozaliia Davydovna and Petr Abramovich Koretskii – with comrades from Odessa: Anastasiia Naumovna Shekhter and Vera Samoilovna (Khaimovna) Gassokh, who both had gone through the same 'revolutionary school' in the circles of Lion and Kovalskii in 1877–79. With Shekhter and Gassokh in Ekaterinoslav, the city's radical circles developed into a well structured and extremely active organization. Here the revolutionaries did not work in isolation from the people. Propagandizing

vigorously among workers, particularly Jewish tailors, shoemakers, and female tobacco-labourers, they created a broad basis of support for their more secretive work of reconstituting the terrorist movement. As the Orzhikh-Bogoraz group's best functioning organization, Ekaterinoslav was selected to be the site of a congress of southern Narodovoltsy scheduled for September 1885. 'From that moment on', wrote Orzhikh, 'Ekaterinoslav became the central point in the South for regular communications, and Anastasiia Naumova – its soul.'⁴⁵

In mid-September preparations for the congress were completed, with delegates arriving from Odessa, Kharkov, Taganrog, Rostov, and Novocherkassk. Although thirteen were expected, only eight were able to attend – half of whom were Jewish: Bogoraz, Orzhikh, Shekhter, and Shternberg. The latter started off the first session with a report on his organizational trip to St Petersburg, conveying the good news that he was able to bring into the organization 'such a valuable moral and intellectual force' as Albert Leibovich Gausman (1859–89), the leading representative of the St Petersburg Narodovoltsy. He also informed the delegates that he had extensive discussions with Lev Kogan-Bernshtein, who had passed through Odessa on his return from exile; and that he, Bernshtein, was ready to join up with the Southerners. The remaining sessions of the congress, which lasted for a whole week, were concerned mainly with formulating an action programme to be published in the forthcoming eleventh issue of *Narodnaia Volia*. At the final meeting it was decided to create a 'supervisory centre' to lead and administer the South-Russian Party Organization of Narodnaia Volia, now formally established. Its membership included six Jews – Bogoraz, Gausman, Krol, Orzhikh, Shekhter, and Shternberg.⁴⁶

The high proportion of Jews in the South-Russian Organization was not without its ideological significance. It gave the group a much more radical political orientation than might have been otherwise. This was clearly evident at the congress itself, where disagreements over terrorism caused a split between Jewish and Gentile delegates, with the latter opposing terrorism as injurious to the cause of socialist propaganda, and the former arguing for 'the systematic and uninterrupted repetition of terrorist acts' as the only means to destroy tsarism.⁴⁷ Orzhikh and Shternberg were the most outspoken exponents of this position, which rested on the revolutionary Jews' general commitment to political rather than socialist objectives. Even more so than Bogoraz and Shekhter, they both insisted that there was 'no place in the subsequent [11th] number of *Narodnaia Volia* for the repetition of socialist dreams, [instead] it was necessary to speak about the burning issues of the day...about the struggle for political freedom'.⁴⁸

That this struggle was essentially of terrorist nature had already been made clear by Shternberg in his forcefully argued 1884 brochure 'Political Terror in Russia'. When he reiterated this standpoint in a much more radical fashion at the congress in the form of a drafted lead article for *Narodnaia Volia*, even the 'terrorist majority', including Orzhikh, was taken aback by his 'purely revolutionary-constitutionalist orientation' and his concomitant emphasis on the 'purely political struggle, the conquest of political liberties'. According to Anastasiia Shekhter, Shternberg 'almost completely ignored the socialist character of the programme [of *Narodnaia Volia*]',⁴⁹

In subsequent discussions, the delegates convinced Shternberg to tone down his extremist political pronouncements by revising his article to take account of the fact that *Narodovoltsy* still considered themselves social revolutionaries. The compromise was engineered by Bogoraz who emotionally favoured terrorism, but in practice placed more emphasis on 'party work'. Very much in tune with this sort of disposition, Shternberg had no difficulty in accommodating his own views since he, like everyone else – 'terrorist' and 'anti-terrorist' alike – recognized that at present it was impossible for the financially weak organization to launch a concerted terrorist attack.⁵⁰

For the same reason the debate on terrorism was largely academic and had no lasting negative effect on the unity of the South-Russian Organization. Yet, there can be no question that the Orzhikh-Bogoraz group was strongly committed to political terrorism even though, in practice, this tactic had to be put on the back-burner for the time being. It was agreed that it was best to concentrate on organization, printing, and propaganda, and to continue in this manner 'to work for the unification of all forces in the various regions of Russia and to strive towards the realization of this [political] idea – terror'.⁵¹ With this resolution, the delegates returned to their respective locations to apply themselves with new energy to their revolutionary travail.

Anastasiia Shekhter remained in Ekaterinoslav, of course, where she and Vera Gassokh propagandized workers while simultaneously maintaining the headquarters of the South-Russian Organization. Shternberg and his friend Moisei Krol intensified their work in Odessa, creating new circles as well as renewing links with labour groups which had been ruptured in 1884. Needless to say, they, as well as all activists belonging to the organization, were also busy channelling and distributing the veritable flood of literature flowing from the printing presses in Novocherkassk and Taganrog. Within three months of the Ekaterinoslav congress thousands of pamphlets and proclamations had been printed – including the eleventh and twelfth issue of *Narodnaia Volia*, which were

combined to turn it into a 'solid journal'. By December 1885 this volume, much of it written by Bogoraz and edited with the help of Orzhikh, had been printed in 2,000 copies.⁵² With this feat accomplished everyone was mobilized to take a hand in disseminating the 'final word' on revolutionary affairs. Orzhikh combined this job with establishing new contacts and confirming old ones in Central and Northern Russia.

On this trip he was accompanied by Sergei Ivanov, who had returned after leaving Russia in disillusionment over the destruction of the Bakh organization in Rostov a year earlier. In Moscow they met Orzhikh's cousin Morits Lazarevich Solomonovich, who was associated with a group of radicals whose leading Jewish personalities, Mikhail Gots, Matvei Fundaminskii, and Osip Minor, were just in the process of forming the Moscow Central Group of Narodovoltsy, which dominated local revolutionary affairs until the end of 1886. Deriving satisfaction from the situation in Moscow, they went to St Petersburg where they met Albert Gausman, who put them in touch with Kogan-Bernshtein, Aleksandr Breitman, Saul Piker, and Boris (Berko) Ginzburg. As in Moscow, Orzhikh felt optimistic about future developments, and together with Bernshtein thought that it would take 'only a month or two to succeed in putting into effect the plan for organizing the North'. But time was precious, for as Orzhikh noted in his memoirs, they 'lived and worked as if on a volcano'.⁵³

The first sign that this volcano was about to erupt reached Orzhikh on his return trip. While staying again with Morits Solomonov in Moscow, he received a coded telegram from Bogoraz informing him that the Taganrog press and its staff had fallen into the hands of the police on the night of 23 January 1886. Within days he took the train back to Ekaterinoslav, which had become the group's last stronghold after Bogoraz and Kogan had decided to liquidate the Novochoerkassk press to prevent its expected seizure. Although the situation looked bleak indeed, they were guardedly hopeful of being able to make good what had been lost.

They agreed that rather than remain in Ekaterinoslav, Orzhikh, Bogoraz, and Kogan would shift their revolutionary work to the promising environs of Moscow and St Petersburg. Here Orzhikh and Bogoraz were to consolidate already existing groups of Narodovoltsy, while Kogan would take over the technical task of rebuilding the Novochoerkassk press in Orel or Tula to print the thirteenth number of *Narodnaia Volia*. Confident that under the leadership respectively of Shekhter, Gassokh, Shternberg and Krol, Ekaterinoslav, Odessa, and Kharkov were to remain 'major centres in the South', the two 'generals' and their technician Kogan got ready for their northern venture.⁵⁴

Prior to their departure they thought it necessary to wrap up some outstanding business such as correspondence with their comrades in Odessa and Kharkov, and the printing of 'news items' to let the public and gendarmerie know: 'Well, gentlemen, you did not think so, but we still have a press!'⁵⁵ However, they paid dearly for this delay. The police had caught up with them just as they were ready to leave.

In the night of 22–23 February 1886, the gendarmerie raided the Ekaterinoslav headquarters of the Orzhikh–Bogoraz group. Except for Bogoraz and Kogan, all Narodovoltsy in this city, including Orzhikh, were arrested. A little later, the same occurred elsewhere: Gausman, Kogan-Bernshtein, and Shternberg all fell into the hands of the police. Only Bogoraz, Kogan, and Krol remained at liberty for another year. But they were no longer in a position to salvage the South-Russian Organization. Deprived of its captain, Orzhikh, there was no one left to repair the revolutionary vessel, which, in any case, had fallen into the hands of the authorities who deported its crew to the far reaches of eastern Siberia – to Iakutsk and Sakhalin.

Natan Bogoraz rightly noted in his artfully written memoirs that 'the destruction of the southern organization ended the history of the "Party of Narodnaia Volia"'.⁵⁶ As the last organized entity of this party in Russia, the Orzhikh–Bogoraz group has been largely ignored in Soviet and, until very recently, Western historiography. Only Norman Naimark has given it the recognition it deserves:

The historical significance of the narodovol'tsy in the South during the mid-1880s should not be underestimated. The government's 'nihilist' phobia continued without interruption, in part because of the [southern] narodovol'tsy's ability to replace their depleted ranks, form new circles, publish revolutionary literature, and plan assassinations. Many of the arguments within the Bogoraz–Orzhikh group resurfaced during the 1890s among those terrorists who eventually formed the Battle Organization of the Socialist-Revolutionary party in April 1902, when the programme of systematic terror resulted in a spectacular series of assassinations of government ministers.⁵⁷

As epigones of Narodnaia Volia, Orzhikh, Bogoraz and their associates were indeed the pioneers of new revolutionary developments in Russia. In propagandizing political terrorism, they conveyed its message to the next generation of social revolutionaries even though they themselves were in no position to practise it; in their tireless efforts to keep the party alive by attracting new recruits for the movement and organizing them into new circles, they created the revolutionary cadres for the 1890s; in printing and distributing thousands of revolutionary journals, pamphlets, and proclamations they produced a quantity of literature that

remained in circulation for years and shaped revolutionary thinking for another decade. Perhaps nothing demonstrates the contribution of Jews in these final years of *Narodnaia Volia* better than the fact that this literature was predominantly written by Jewish *Narodovoltsy* and almost exclusively printed on underground presses which they had set up.

There is an epilogue to the story of the South-Russian Organization which exemplifies the unique role played by Jews in the final chapter of the history of *Narodnaia Volia*. In June 1886 Natan Bogoraz and Zakharii Kogan constructed the last fully equipped printing press operating in the name of this party. Having escaped the Ekaterinoslav pogrom, they went north, as had been agreed previously, to contact the Central Group of Mikhail Gots, and with its help build a new press at Tula south of Moscow. For the next six months, thousands of items were run off on this press and personally conveyed by Bogoraz and Kogan to *Narodovoltsy* circles in Moscow, Kharkov, and St Petersburg. Assisted by Vera Obukhova, the *khoziaika* of the Tula establishment, they produced numerous items of which *The Trial of the 29 in Warsaw* was probably the largest brochure produced on any underground press in Russia before 1917. However, their 'dream project' of getting out the thirteenth number of *Narodnaia Volia* did not materialize. In spite of what they had accomplished, they were unable to rescue *Narodnaia Volia*. As Zakharii Kogan fittingly said in his memoirs, 'the Tula press was our swan song'.⁵⁸

In December–January 1886–87 a wave of arrests hit the Moscow *Narodovoltsy*, and also reached Bogoraz and Kogan. While on 'revolutionary business' in Moscow they were arrested on 9 December and 24 January respectively. Treason *à la Degayevshchina* was the cause. Only now its hero was Sergei Zubatov, who began his brilliant career in the Okhrana by informing on his erstwhile, mainly Jewish, comrades of the Moscow circle.⁵⁹ Except for some scattered groups of primarily Jewish *Narodovoltsy* in places like Kharkov, St Petersburg, Vilna, and Minsk, this first act of Zubatov in launching his own career as the Tsar's most effective counter-revolutionary agent and advocate of 'police socialism' – in short, *Zubatovshchina* – spelled the end of *Narodnaia Volia* as a tangible movement.

Zubatov's treason did not, however, terminate the revolutionary ferment in Russia. Just as *Zubatovshchina* had its roots in the 1880s, so did Russian Social Democracy and especially the Jewish social-democratic Bund which recruited its early following from students and workers who, more often than not, had been propagandized by Jewish *Narodovoltsy*. Moreover, Populism as an idea and *Narodnaia Volia* as its ultimate heroic tradition survived the repressive 1880s and, in the 1890s,

led to the revival of neo-populist groupings which eventually coalesced to form the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries.

Jews pioneered both of these developments. Their propaganda and general underground activity contributed indirectly, but nonetheless importantly, to the rise of a Russian social-democratic movement. By the same token, but more directly in terms of their ideological conviction and subsequent personal commitment, they helped to create a new social-revolutionary movement which claimed the Populist heritage of the 1870s and 1880s. Recalling his Moscow days, Natan Bogoraz spelled out succinctly the latter connection when he wrote: 'In Moscow there was that basic group [*osnovnaia grupp*a], from which arose later on a fresh wave of terrorist attack. At its centre stood Mikhail Gots and Isidor Fundaminskii ... These were the living transitional links from the old Narodnaia Volia to the new Socialist-Revolutionary Party.'⁶⁰

12 Conclusion: Haskalah and the socialist promise of salvation

The Jewish epigones of Narodnaia Volia yield the most compelling evidence of the outstanding role of Jews in the Russian revolutionary movement. Always prominently represented in its leading circles and organizations, they sustained the movement in its darkest hour and preserved its tradition for the new parties of opposition which arose in the 1890s. The fact that the arrests of the late eighties netted a disproportionally large number of Jews was an accurate reflection of their historic importance. It also confirmed the long-standing conviction of tsarist officials that the Jews were a particularly hardy and volatile element accounting for much of the political unrest of the two decades between 1870 and 1890. What the police official of the Third Department, M. M. Merkulov, had already voiced with grave concern in 1877 – namely, that the Jewish youth was an important potential source of recruits for the revolutionary movement¹ – had become a stark reality ten years later.

Now, in 1887, it appeared to the authorities that the movement was kept alive, in spite of heavy losses, only because of the continuous supply of Jewish recruits, who, skilfully evading the police, constantly started up new pockets of revolutionary resistance. Venting his frustration over this phenomenon, the Moscow chief of police wrote in February 1887: 'The very people who resist a transition to a peaceful program are the Jews who recently have been quietly attempting to grasp the initiative of the revolutionary movement in their hands.'² The same sentiment was expressed by General N. I. Shebeko in his comprehensive report of socialist subversion in Russia, 1878–87. While pleased with what he saw as the drastic decline in the number of 'participants in the struggle' over the years since 1881, he warned that during the same period 'the profession of destructive ideas has generally, little by little, become the property of the Jewish element, which very often figured [prominently] in revolutionary circles'. To make his case stick, he added in parentheses that 'approximately 80 per cent of known socialists in the South [of Russia] in 1886–1887 were Jews'.³ Although statements such as these

were often contrived for the purpose of pinning the blame for Russia's troubles on its 'Jewish element', this study has shown that the tsarist government had good reasons indeed to be wary of Jewish socialists and to be convinced that 'Jews were the most dangerous component of the revolutionary movement.'⁴ Clearly, antisemitic generalizations insinuating a deliberate Jewish revolutionary conspiracy in Russia should not prevent us from recognizing the factual basis underlying the phobia in official and reactionary circles that the Jew was poised to destroy Holy tsarist Russia.

There is, first of all, weighty statistical evidence which makes it hard to ignore that throughout the 1870s and 1880s Jews were a substantial element in Russian revolutionary activity. Starting off with Shebeko's claim that 80 per cent of socialists in southern Russia were Jews, we might note that this figure was not a product of antisemitic fantasy.⁵ While his estimate was not arrived at through a careful analysis of available data, it was based on compelling impressions derived from police reports covering the fight against political subversion in 1885–87. This showed that almost all revolutionary activity in the South and Southwest appeared to be perpetrated by Jewish revolutionaries. Here, of course, the prime example was the Bogoraz–Orzhikh group whose ratio of Jewish membership, both at the centre and in associated circles, was definitely in excess of 50 per cent. Moreover, just when Shebeko was getting his own report ready in 1889, the police had broken up a new organization, the Circle of Narodovoltsy (1887–89), whose rank and file was 77 per cent Jewish. The circle had originated abroad under the leadership of Isaak Vulfovich Dembo (1865–89) and its Russian operation, aiming at the assassination of Alexander III on 1 March 1889, was in the hands of Sofia Mikhailovna Ginsburg (1863–91). Indeed, both in Russia and abroad (mainly in Zurich), the organization was predominantly staffed by Jews who, in turn, relied on Jewish contacts in Berlin, Grodno, Vilna, and Minsk for clandestine communications and contraband transports.⁶ Even for an unprejudiced observer it was hard to escape the impression that by the end of the 1880s the revolutionary profession was dominated by socialist Jews, who surpassed numerically all other national minorities, and perhaps even the Russians, in the principal areas of continued anti-government activities – the *émigré* colonies of Western Europe and provinces of the Jewish Pale of Settlement.⁷

The years 1886–89 clearly epitomize the overwhelming revolutionary role of Jews. But having said this, let us assess more concisely the overall ratio of Jewish participation. What, for instance, was the rate of increase

since the early 1870s? Can one sustain the estimates of Salo Baron, Louis Greenberg, and others who argue that in the seventies the ratio of Jews among the *narodniki* did not exceed 4.4 per cent, a figure corresponding roughly to their percentage of population, and that this proportionality was lost only in subsequent decades?⁸ Finally, what in fact is the validity of Shebeko's figure of 80 per cent for southern Russia in 1887, and how indicative is it of the growth of Jewish involvement as a whole?

Collating all the available data for the 1880s, we find that Jewish participation in this decade amounted to at least 16 per cent. This is a conservative estimate, however, for as a critical analysis of statistical evidence indicates, the overall average for the 1880s was probably as high as 17 or 18 per cent and may well have inched towards 20 per cent.⁹

Comparing the 16 per cent ratio for the 1880s with that of the 1870s we find that the rate of Jewish participation in the movement had doubled. For according to Boris Orlov's statistical analysis of data in the second volume of the bio-bibliographical dictionary (*DBS*), there were 502 Jews (7.6 per cent) in a total of 6,605 persons listed as activists in the 1870s. Though, as Orlov notes, their real number was much higher since this volume of the dictionary did not include those revolutionaries who were still active in the subsequent decade.¹⁰ Making allowance for this we may raise the figure to 8 per cent for 1870–79. Thus, clearly, the conventional 4 per cent estimate must be viewed as grossly incorrect, in that it is half the real figure. But what was the actual dynamic or pattern of increase reflected in the averages for the two decades?

Both numerically and proportionately Jewish revolutionary involvement peaked in the second half of the 1880s. But this was not a sudden increase sharply marked off from preceding developments. The growth rate of Jews in the movement was fairly consistent. Although there are recognizable leaps, especially in 1875–76, 1878–79, 1881–82, 1885–87, the pattern of increase between 1870/71 and 1889 was relatively even, with a steady rise of approximately 5 per cent every four to five years. Figure 1 offers a rudimentary illustration of this rate of growth.

The points on the graph, derived from data covering two or three years and plotted midway between them,¹¹ generally coincide with verifiable increases of Jewish participation at specific stages in the development of revolutionary Populism. For instance the first point (1871–72) is indicative of the Chaikovskyist phase which marks the beginning of a noticeable presence of Jews in the movement in such locations as St Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, and Kiev. Clearly, 1871–73 was the only time of which it can be said that Jewish radicalism was generally representative of the 4 to 5 per cent share Jews had in the population of the Russian empire. In 1874–76 (point 2) this proportionality was

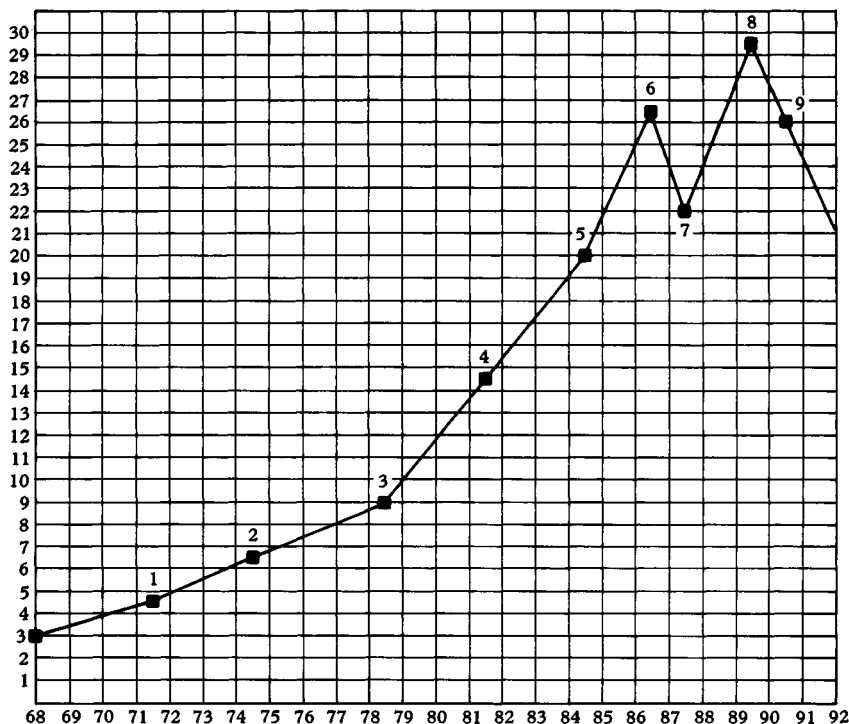


Fig. 1.

definitely lost. By then their ratio in the movement had climbed to between 6 to 7 per cent, signifying the first large-scale entry of Jews from the cities and *shtetlekh* of the Pale, often in the form of circles that were almost completely Jewish in membership such as, for example, the first and second Vilna circle which were Chaikovskyist offsprings and developed vigorously under the general influence of the *v narod* movement of 1874–75. The next big increase occurred in 1878–79 (point 3), which was probably linked to the growing terrorist militancy of the movement that attracted Jews especially from the South of Russia as exemplified by the Vittenberg circle in Nikolaev and Jewish participation in the Kovalskii demonstration of 1878. The steep climb at the beginning of the 1880s (point 4) is attributable to numerous radicalized Jewish students, both male and female, who after the assassination of Alexander II thought it their duty to uphold the banner of Narodnaia Volia in the bleak days of 1881–82. As we have seen in chapter 11, they were that ‘new generation’ of revolutionary Jews whose ranks were continually swollen by like-minded compatriots pushing the rate of Jewish participants in

Narodnaia Volia beyond the threshold of 20 per cent in 1884–85 (point 5). Besides maintaining the party in St Petersburg, they often were also responsible for creating new organizations in western and south-western Russia consisting of many new local Jewish recruits in places like Vilna, Minsk, Kiev, and Odessa. The upshot of this development was that in 1886–89 (points 6, 7, 8) revolutionary subversion without Jews had become unthinkable as they now accounted for between 25 and 30 per cent of all activists in Russia.¹² This was particularly true with respect to the principal area of revolutionary activity – the heavily Jewish populated provinces of the South. Here, especially in 1886–87, Jews made up approximately 35 to 40 per cent of the movement's membership.¹³ While this is substantially below Shebeko's 80 per cent, there can be no question that even half this figure is still an impressive indication of the degree to which Jews had become a critical mass in the Russian revolutionary movement over the course of some twenty years that witnessed on the average a five-fold increase in their share of participation.

The sheer size of the Jewish revolutionary contingent in the late 1880s was mirrored in the growing presence of Jews among political exiles in Siberia, especially in faraway places like Iakutsk. The banishment of Jews to this region was deliberate government policy that had come into force in 1888. To deter the 'Jewish element' from partaking in socialist subversion, a Department of Police regulation of that year stipulated that all radicals of Jewish origin were to be sent to the most isolated and ill-provisioned area of exile in the empire – the northern districts of eastern Siberia's Iakutsk province. The effect of this policy transformed Iakutsk into a 'pale of settlement' for Jewish exiles. Among them were Narodovoltsy veterans who made their 'last stand' in what is known as the *Iakutskaiia tragediia* in the annals of Russian revolutionary history.

The Iakutsk tragedy of March 1889 was almost entirely a 'Jewish affair' in that it involved mainly activists such as Lev Kogan-Bernshtein, Albert Gausman, Roza Frank, Mikhail Gots, Osip Minor, Anastasia Shekhter, Moisei Bramson, Vera Gassokh, and Matvei Fundaminskii, who had been seized in the arrests of 1886–87 which destroyed their organizations in southern Russia, Moscow, and St Petersburg. Together with two dozen comrades, including some non-Jewish friends, they protested in the town of Iakutsk against a new regulation, issued on 16 March, which demanded that they leave immediately and dangerously underprovisioned for their final destination, Sredne-Kolymsk, some 3,000 kilometres further north. Totally unprepared for this long trip on foot through vast stretches of Siberian wilderness, and worried that the

women and children in their party might not survive the ordeal, they refused to comply and repeatedly petitioned the authorities to postpone their departure until proper arrangements had been made for a safe journey. Awaiting the final ruling, they assembled during the night of 21–22 March in the quarters of the Vilna Narodovolets Iakov Notkin, determined to resist any attempt to enforce compliance by the use of arms. The response of the authorities was swift and ruthless. In the morning, after refusing to abandon the building, they were surrounded by troops who suddenly opened fire. The carnage caused by several salvos left six people dead and eight wounded. The rest, including the injured, were taken prisoner and tried by military court three months later.¹⁴

At this trial twenty-nine people were subjected to military justice at its worst. Without observing proper legal procedures, the court sentenced the defendants, twenty-four or 83 per cent of whom were Jews, to penalties ranging from long years of additional exile with forced labour to execution by hanging – the noose claimed the lives of Gausman, Kogan-Bernshtein, and Nikolai Zotov. Although unique in its severity, the Iakutsk affair exemplified the large ratio of Jews among Siberian exiles singled out for ‘special treatment’ by the tsarist authorities – both in terms of victimization and of deportation to labour camps beyond the Arctic circle.¹⁵ More remarkable, though, it also demonstrated the genuine heroism of Jews in the persons of Gausman and Bernshtein, and the idealistic motives which sustained them in facing a death that was not warranted by the nature of their crime.

In his characterization of the three *Iakutiany* condemned to death, Osip Minor makes the revealing observation that while the Russian Zotov conveyed in his farewell letters to parents and friends his love for them and his hatred for the tsarist regime, Gausman and Bernshtein wrote about their unshakable faith in ‘the great cause of the socialist liberation of mankind’ which would result in ‘the triumph of truth and justice’.¹⁶ Their letters, particularly those addressed to their children, are a testament to their noble revolutionary intentions, expressing the deeply moral nature and universalistic quality of their socialist convictions. In them they exalt in an almost religious frenzy the ideals of love, truth, and goodness (*liubov’, istina, dobro*) as the principal sources of progress and the moral imperatives which compelled them to consecrate their lives to the revolution. They went to the gallows on 7 August 1889: Gausman in the firm belief that ‘the age of truth and goodness is approaching soon’; Bernshtein with ‘a clear conscience and the consciousness’ that, as he wrote the night before, ‘to the end I honoured my duty and remained true to my convictions, and what can be a better,

much more happy death [than this]?¹⁷ On this occasion, both confirmed their revolutionary past and saw themselves as martyrs whose fate was a necessary sacrifice to advance universal happiness; its silver linings were already visible to them on the horizon.

The letters of Gausman and Kogan-Bernshtein bear a striking resemblance to Solomon Vittenberg's farewell on the eve of his execution ten years earlier. Indeed, they are a forceful reminder of the cosmopolitan-socialist *Weltanschauung* that was so characteristic of Jews who identified themselves with the Russian revolutionary movement. This cosmopolitan socialism was the keynote in the motives that led them to leave *di yidishe gas*, to supersede their maskilic radicalism with social-revolutionary ideals, and to submerge themselves in the brave new world of Populist circles. But was their cosmopolitan socialism devoid of any Jewish content, as has been claimed by historians? Was it merely the ideology of 'frantic assimilationists', who sought to promote Russification in a socialist guise?¹⁸

Judging from what we know about the thoughts and actions of Jewish radicals, this was hardly the case. One only need recall the motives which led Akselrod, Tsukerman, Liberman, Zundeleovich, Aptekman, Deich, Gurevich, and others to enter the 'universal church' to realize that their cosmopolitanism was a transfiguration of their Jewishness rather than an assimilationist desire to conform with the norms and values of contemporary Russian society. Evidently, their 'sincere assimilationism', as Iokhelson termed it, had nothing in common with Russification for the sake of social acceptability and professional advancement. They did not forsake their Jewish heritage to replace it with another form of cultural identity or ethnic belonging.¹⁹ What they sought can best be described as an abstract and futuristic idealism of assimilation *qua* emancipation in a denationalized and secularized democratic society, ideally of universal scope. Leaving the world of their childhood did not necessarily imply its total abandonment in one act of irreversible forgetfulness. For many this departure under the sacred halo of socialism was the next best solution to their own existential problems – a solution that was enormously attractive since it also held out the utopian promise of the 'genuine emancipation' of all Jews in a socialist republic of universal brotherhood devoid of national, religious, and social discrimination or even distinctions.

How closely this cosmopolitan socialism was related to their Jewishness has been shown in their adoption of a revolutionary career and/or their response to the anti-Jewish pogroms. That this integral connection was still valid for the Jewish Narodovoltsy of the 1880s is, once again, most clearly apparent with respect to Kogan-Bernshtein and his Yakutsk

comrades. Before his execution Bernshtein requested to see the local Rabbi, Levin, and made the following 'confession':

I do not ask for your spiritual service as a clergyman since I have ceased long ago to be religious. But, as a Rabbi, you are also a representative of the Jewish community, and it is for this reason that I turn to you with the request to convey to my people that I did not renounce them. By working all my life in the Russian revolutionary party, I worked for the destitute Jewish masses fully convinced that their fate is closely connected with the fate of all peoples living on the territory of Russia, and that the liberation of the Jewish people from political oppression can be realized only with the liberation of all of Russia.²⁰

That this was not an exceptional statement, but expressed the prevailing sentiment of Jewish Narodovoltsy, is most persuasively shown by the fact that another participant in the Iakutsk drama, Abram Magat, had said as much as ten years earlier when, as noted in chapter 7, he wrote to his sister: 'I want to arm myself with [Narodnaia Volia's] dagger and revolver to fight the war for their [the Jews'] freedom ... [For] if Russia gets a constitution due to a profound revolutionary upheaval, Jews will also gain equal rights.'

That such a motive was at all consciously held by socialist Jews has been questioned by most historians. Although aware that time and again this *Jewish* motivation surfaced explicitly and implicitly in the writings and remonstrations of Jewish radicals from Akselrod to Kogan-Bernshtein, scholars such as Dubnow, Baron, Schapiro, and, to a lesser degree, Tscherikower and Greenberg rejected the notion that Jews might also have been motivated as Jews to take up the profession of revolution. Protestations to the contrary, especially by people like Deich, the arch-typical representative of 'the cosmopolitan-assimilationist tradition' according to Tscherikower, were not to be taken seriously because of their apologetic nature.²¹ If anything, special reference to Jews in the all-inclusive emancipatory pronouncements of Jewish Populists have been perceived as little else but comforting *ex post facto* rationalizations in moments of bad conscience, justifying their utter disregard for the plight of their own kin. But why have a bad conscience, why justify one's ideological commitment to the 'universal principles' of socialism in terms of Jewish suffering and *rekhtlozikeyt*, if one is bereaved of any sense of Jewishness? Kogan-Bernshtein's 'confession' may have been his last word about his own deeply felt attachment to the people of his origin, but surely this was not an afterthought that came to him in the final countdown to execution! So why deny him and so many others what they claimed – that they *consciously* sympathized with the plight of the Jewish masses, and that they *genuinely* believed that as Russian revolutionaries they were serving the Jewish cause of emancipation as

much as they were fighting for the socialist salvation of humanity in general? True, not every Jew in the revolutionary movement was a Magat or Bernshtein, but this should not prevent us from seeing that over and above his Populist allegiance the Jewish revolutionary was a cosmopolitan socialist whose ideology almost always implied a Jewish motif that 'flowed from internal causes, related to Jewishness'.²²

The integral relationship between a socialist Jew's cosmopolitanism and Jewishness has often been lost sight of because in affirming the former Jewish radicals usually renounced the latter, and thus there seemed to be no visible connection between the two. Yet, it is precisely this phenomenon, in which 'the renunciation of Jewishness was ... *coupled* with a strong affirmation of cosmopolitanism',²³ that brings to the fore the Jewish origin and nature of the cosmopolitan socialism of Populist Jews. Convinced that their native culture was an anachronism that was kept alive by an equally anarchistic surrounding society, these men were rebels without firm social and/or national moorings in either the Jewish or Russian world. They were strangers who, like all men cast adrift in a turbulent sea, sought security by boarding and helping to navigate any ship which would sail into the sunrise. The only vessel that came into sight and took them aboard as full members of the crew, sailed under the flag of revolution. Here they found brotherhood, recognition, and a place they could call their own; here they regained a sense of identity, of belonging and fulfilment, that they had sought desperately in so far as they ceased to identify with their Jewishness. Cut off from their original sources of Jewish existence, they planted – or rather replanted – themselves firmly on the deck of this life-saving vessel which promised a safe, albeit stormy, journey to the promised land. Succinctly put, their cosmopolitanism was really the obverse side of Jewishness – a search for identity that was predicated on their estrangement from the community in which they were raised and which had shaped their spiritual being. Hence the religious-existential nature of their identification with socialism and its Russian 'church' – the revolutionary movement.

The socio-psychological complex underlying this search for identity, resulting in the adoption of a cosmopolitan socialist faith in the service of revolutionary Populism, has been repeatedly explored in this work. In summing up the collective experience of Jewish youths who became strangers in their own homes, rebels in the name of humanity, and loyal subjects of the Russian revolutionary movement, let us highlight some of the characteristics of their odyssey from the Jewish cradle to what appeared to be a final home-coming in a socialist *Heimat*.

In very general terms they passed through three stages which shaped

their lives as revolutionaries. Sociologically, these may be defined as: (1) Jewish embeddedness (identity); (2) estrangement or withdrawal from the Jewish community (de-identification); and (3) socialist assimilation (re-identification).²⁴ Almost without exception revolutionary Jews had been embedded to varying degrees in a Jewish *Lebenswelt* – socially, culturally, and educationally. Although their rootedness in the Jewish community, as well as their social origins – extending all the way from the upper crust of the wealthy merchant class to the lower strata of impoverished shop-keepers, *melamdin*, and so-called *luftmenshn* – differed substantially, the vast majority grew up in families which, especially in the 1860s and 1870s, were still rooted in a Jewish way of life. Even where traditional social links had grown weak, as for instance in the case of well-to-do commercial assimilationist families in Odessa, Kiev, Moscow, and St Petersburg, there remained enough cultural and educational exposure to give them a Jewish consciousness. Thus most Jews who turned socialist in the sixties, seventies and eighties were definitely raised in a setting which provided them with a primary education – and sometimes a secondary one – that was linguistically, religiously, and socially informed by Jewish norms and behaviour. In short, they grew up with a Jewish identity.

To be sure, the cultural content of their Jewishness varied significantly. For some it was thoroughly determined by a traditional religious upbringing, in others this traditionalism was modified by secular maskilic aspirations, and in most it was a Judaism in the spirit of the Haskalah, which often bordered on assimilationism and was particularly characteristic of the backgrounds of radicals in the 1880s. Yet, despite all these variations, they were people whose childhood and early adolescence were invariably shaped by a Jewish milieu which imbued them with a different set of mental images, existential anxieties, and behavioural tendencies than was the case with their Gentile comrades who, more often than not, were of gentry origin. And yet, as we know, the latter became their focus of identification even though they were socially, ethnically, and culturally a different breed of people.

In order to comprehend the process that brought about this 'identificational assimilation'²⁵ with the Russian radical intelligentsia, it is best to recall that the Jewish youth was born into a traditional society which was disintegrating under the impact of two 'revolutions': the Jewish Enlightenment and the Alexandrine reforms. Regardless of how deeply they might have been embedded in a Jewish environment during the first fifteen or twenty years of their lives, the very foundations of this society were being rapidly eroded from within and outside. Culturally, the traditional Judaic forms of Jewish life were challenged by the Haskalah;

educationally, secularization undermined old religious norms; and, socially, the quasi-emancipatory decrees of Alexander II and the concomitant economic transformation of Russia resulted in an unprecedented degree of socio-economic mobility which – both geographically and occupationally – removed many Jewish families from the traditional life-style of their fathers. All this took place in the 1860s and 1870s, that is, the decades in which the generation of Zundeleovich, Bogoraz, Gurevich, and Goldenberg came of age.

Nothing demonstrates the unsettling and dramatic consequences of these changes better than the transformation of the Goldenbergs from an observant, orthodox family into a well-to-do assimilationist merchant household. The eldest son, Grigorii Davidovich, was still brought up in the old ways – including, of course, a primary religious education in the kheder – while his parents resided in Berdichev,²⁶ which was as much a Jewish town as there could be one in the Pale of Settlement. Benefitting from the liberalization of residence requirements under Alexander II, David Goldenberg moved to Kiev in search of a better livelihood, and, indeed, succeeded in building up a flourishing business enterprise. The obverse side of this commercial success story was the family's gradual estrangement from what had been its natural, and spiritually sustaining, social and cultural habitat in Berdichev. Both parents and children sought substitutes in maskilic prescriptions which moved them as time went on further away from the certitudes of Judaism. While the parents, set in their ways and preoccupied with the chores of earning a living, were probably able to strike a balance between the secular wisdom of the Haskalah and their ingrained Jewish religiosity, the children – now in their teens and educated in Gentile schools – were set adrift to seek for themselves a meaning in life by drinking from foreign wells which poured forth all sort of enticing ideas. Caught midway between rejecting their own Jewish heritage and finding a niche in non-Jewish society, they attached themselves to a group – the nihilists, who were their peers at gymnasium and whose aspirations were in harmony with their own maskilic rebelliousness. Assimilating into the nihilist subculture, they regained a personal identity that became socially rooted in the Russian revolutionary movement and ideologically impregnated with socialism.

The three-fold pattern – Jewish embeddedness, withdrawal and concomitant search for a new focus of identity, and finally integration in revolutionary groups – that characterized the 'embedding process' of the Goldenberg children was typical of the socialist Jews of the 1870s and 1880s. There were, of course, variations in the combination of cultural, educational, and socio-economic elements which caused this process, and nor was it necessary for all elements to be present in it. The

Goldenberg case is rather an ideal-typical paradigm in that it contained the principal features of a traditionalist-orthodox background, horizontal and vertical mobility, maskilic reformism, and unsuccessful integration into mainstream Russian civilization. But equally prevalent was the experience of people like Iokhelson, Liberman, Tsukerman, Zundele-vich, Akselrod, and Vittenberg, whose estrangement took place in the very womb of Jewish society, and as such was not directly related to changes in their families' socio-economic standing or ill-fated attempts to find acceptance as full members of the Russian middle class. The latter was an issue neither for their parents nor for themselves. Their alienation and eventual radicalization was caused primarily by cultural and educational factors. They all were raised in traditional Jewish homes, securely embedded in the native community where they received a primary and sometimes even a secondary religious education in the kheder, yeshiva and/or rabbinical seminary. But neither of these institutions, least of all the latter, insulated them against the secularizing influences of the Haskalah and the concurrent nihilist 'enlightenment' – influences which often combined or were mutually reinforcing, especially in people like Akselrod and Vittenberg who entered the Russian gymnasium due to fortuitous circumstances.

The impact of this has been vividly portrayed by a close acquaintance of Akselrod, who himself was caught up in the new ideas which, he writes, 'had such a powerful attraction for the [Jewish] youth and forced them to find a way out of their narrow *Lebenswelt*'.

But it was difficult for them to find the right path. [This search] brought forth a [new] generation of *maskilim* whose development was not gradual and normal. Abandoning the Talmud and turning their back to [rabbinical] casuistry, they began to devour Haskalah-books *ad infinitum*, and the result was that they read a lot without, however, being able to satisfy their soul. Ceaselessly they searched for something and always felt that their soul was empty. And the new teachers, the *maskilim*, gave their pupils literature not at all appropriate for their mental disposition. Only beginning to learn German, the [youthful] *maskil* read already [Goethe's] *Faust*, Spinoza, and Kant; and once he had mastered German, the teachers gave him right away Pisarev and Belinsky, and Mill's *Political Economy* [in Russian]. Having not yet digested this literature – he read already Chernyshevsky's *What is to be Done?* Nothing was systematically and scientifically studied, about [real] life we did not know anything, and a clear goal did not exist for us. Only incoherent thoughts, only elevating phrases, were constantly on our lips.²⁷

This incoherent maze of ideas was finally brought under a common denominator, socialism, that gave them a secular religion and the much sought-after goal in life which completely severed their links to the Jewish community. This final parting of ways was made easy for most of

them because they had found little sympathy in seeking their personal emancipation from the tradition of their fathers. Pariahs to their own people whose ultra-conservative elements often persecuted them for their 'evil ideas' and impetuous behaviour, they now found a haven for themselves in the revolutionary circles of Russia.

In a nutshell, then, the Haskalah had turned a large group of Jewish youths into rebels against the established religious and patriarchal order of traditional Judaism; the great reforms – encouraging this development socially and educationally – made this antagonism irreversible and deepened their estrangement from Jewish life. While the former allowed their radicalization, the latter transformed them into social-revolutionary extremists. For better or worse, they now were tied with soul and body to a group of people who accepted them into their ranks without apparent prejudice, without discrimination, and without conflicts over basic values and interests. The alienated Jewish youth, in other words, entered the 'magic circle' of Russia's revolutionary subculture which allowed for his 'identificational assimilation' – the final leg of his journey in search of a *Heimat* that took care of his basic emotional needs of social belonging and spiritual satisfaction.

The strength of this attachment to their new socialist *Heimat* was not easily weakened considering the religious-existential nature of their identification with the Russian revolutionary movement. Only revolutionary antisemitism in general and personal rejection by their peers in particular could have ruptured this bond and undermined this idealization of the movement, and thus preempted its existential significance for a homeless Jewish intelligentsia dedicated to the socialist transformation of humanity. Contrary to conventional interpretations, neither was the case, however. To be sure, the movement was not free of antisemitic sentiments. But these were more than neutralized by the absence of personal animosity against Jewish comrades on the one hand, and strong Gentile reactions against antisemitic manifestations in the movement on the other.²⁸

Moreover, as most socialist Jews realized, the revolutionary pogrom attitude in 1881–82 was not antisemitically motivated, as has been argued fallaciously by almost all historians. Of course, as we have detailed in chapter 10, these anti-Jewish riots caused many Jews to reflect on their role in a movement which seemed to approve of the unrest in the naive expectation that this was the beginning of a revolutionary conflagration. Without exception, they all were deeply disturbed by this attitude, especially once they comprehended the antisemitic character of the pogroms. This gave occasion to much soul-searching. Those who

were least embedded in the revolutionary community felt deserted by their Gentile comrades, who failed to take a clear stand against the pogroms and their Populist sympathizers. Disillusioned by this ambivalence, they left the movement and returned to the Jewish fold either as socialists or, in rare instances, as nationalists serving the Zionist cause as was the case with Arkadii Finkelshtein and Leiba Davidovich.²⁹ But this reaction was not representative. In general, the Jewish revolutionary emerged from his 'painful spiritual stock taking' with a renewed commitment to the Russian revolutionary cause and an unimpaired faith in universalistic socialist principles.³⁰

This reaffirmation of revolutionary loyalty was made all the easier to adhere to as it became apparent to Jewish revolutionaries that their own misgivings over pogroms were appreciated and increasingly accepted by their comrades, who soon recognized how foolish they had been to equate the riots with peasant *buntarstvo*. Thus, Jews in their respective organizations were vindicated in their belief that antisemitism had nothing to do with the initial pro-pogrom attitude in the revolutionary movement – an attitude which, after all, many of them had shared as well in the beginning.

As the principal party of the revolutionary movement in the 1880s, Narodnaia Volia for its part reciprocated the trust placed in it by its Jewish following. Rather than apologetically defending its original pro-pogrom sentiment, it let it be known through its publications that revolutionary antisemitic arguments would no longer be tolerated for the sake of political expediency. This was succinctly stated by German Lopatin in his editorial of the September 1884 issue of *Narodnaia Volia* where he wrote: 'Protest is vitally important – without protest there can be no revolution ... But we are not at all obliged, nor do [we] even have the right, to lower our revolutionary idea before the people by participating in [antisemitic] acts which by conscience and conviction we do not recognize as wise or just.'³¹

Two years later, the same point was made by the Jewish Narodovolets Ilia Rubanovich in the pages of *Vestnik narodnoi voli*. He appealed to the revolutionary intelligentsia to fight fearlessly against popular prejudice rooted in the despotic tradition of the autocratic state, stating: 'it is simply in the interests of cause, the interest of the labouring masses [which] strictly demands that conscious activists do not lower themselves to the unconscious impulses of the mass displayed in ... [antisemitic protests], but rather raise it up by criticism and organization'. And addressing specifically Jewish activists, Rubanovich told them that the pogroms made it more paramount than ever to identify with Narodnaia Volia in order to overthrow the tsarist regime which 'stands in the path

of the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia's goals – the political and economic liberation of the people'. For, he concluded, this intelligentsia 'strives to realize for all the Russian people precisely those conditions of life which are sought by the Jewish masses in particular'.³²

The admonition of Ilia Rubanovich was heeded by the vast majority of socialistically inclined Jews. Far from marking a break in revolutionary commitment, the pogrom-crisis – though perhaps a watershed in the national life of Russian Jewry in giving rise to Zionism and emigration – did not disrupt the flow of Jews into the revolutionary movement, as has usually been asserted in Jewish historiography. Instead of causing alienation, it strengthened their solidarity with the movement; instead of undermining their socialist faith, it deepened their cosmopolitan convictions; instead of diverting them *en masse* into nationalist channels, it drove many more into the ranks of Narodnaia Volia; and, finally, instead of signifying a complete divestment of their Jewishness, it reinforced rather than weakened their Jewish consciousness. This latter point is particularly noteworthy because it shows that continued Jewish revolutionary dedication was integrally linked with a heightened sense of Jewish self-awareness – an awareness which, paradoxical as it may seem, was wedded to a socialist Jew's identification with Russian revolutionary Populism.

In words reminiscent of Pavel Akselrod's unpublished 1882 brochure, Rubanovich refers to the renewed Jewish sensibilities of his comrades due to the pogroms which, he writes, made the 'present moment extremely opportune for a *rapprochement* [*sblizheniie*] of the Jewish intelligentsia with the Jewish proletariat. The pogroms reawakened previously suppressed feelings and made the [Jewish] youth more sensitive to the suffering of its own people, and the people more receptive to revolutionary ideas.'³³ The degree to which anti-Jewish riots made Populist Jews aware of their Jewishness and their obligation to include their own people in the future salvation of mankind was already evident during the 1871 pogroms. It led, as we have seen, to Lev Deich's 'return' and maskilic activity among the Jewish poor in Kiev, and to Solomon Chudnovskii's identification with the victims of the Odessa Easter riots. For both, this event was a direct incentive to seek a revolutionary solution to the Jewish Question. But for them, as for most Jewish radicals in the 1870s, this solution was perceived in purely socialist terms, namely, as a total reconstruction of society in which Jews would be completely emancipated and integrated. In contrast, the pogrom-crisis of 1881–82, and even more so its long-term consequences (the infamous May Laws of 1882 and the imposition of a *numerus clausus* on Jewish students in 1887), added a new political dimension to this old cosmopolitan idea of universal

emancipation – a dimension which was much more tied in with immediate Jewish concerns of impoverishment and *rekhtlozigkeyt*.

This ensured that in the eighties the Jewish motif in the radicalization and socialist ideology of Jews was even more pronounced than in the seventies. The specifically Jewish motives arising out of the pogroms, and tsarist anti-Jewish hostility thereafter, led not only to a steep increase of Jewish revolutionary involvement but also to a more direct linkage between Jewish aspirations and revolutionary Russia in the mind of socialist Jews. They now became thoroughly tuned in to the idea that ‘the Russian revolution, as the true embodiment of society’s progressive strivings, contains within itself all the conditions for the salvation of Jews ... [For] only the Russian revolution can give to Jews the rights of citizenship [*grazhdanskiia prava*] ... only it alone can provide the poor mass of urban Jews with all the conditions for a reasonable human existence.’³⁴

As can readily be appreciated, the implicitly Jewish motif in the revolutionary *Weltanschauung* that was typical of Deich’s and Chudnovskii’s socialist cosmopolitanism in the 1870s, assumed after 1881–82 a much more explicit, political form of expression on the one hand, and a more consciously Jewish socialist orientation on the other. The former attracted Jews to the political-constitutional aims of Narodnaia Volia; the latter gave rise to quasi-social-democratic activity in places like Minsk, Odessa, and Vilna. In short, radical Jews did what Rubanovich, and Akselrod before him, had been advocating: namely, that the Jewish *intelligent* need not suppress his Jewish sentiments, but instead, and because of it, should join the Russian revolutionary movement for the sake of the Jewish proletariat in particular and civil liberties for Jews in general.³⁵

The clearly recognizable Jewish motif which motivated radical Jews to link their, as well as their own people’s, fate with Narodnaia Volia did not, however, change their basic socialist assimilationism. Although the immediate political goal of this party was particularly suited to attract scores of ‘reawakened’ Jewish *intelligenty*, this did not – as noted in chapter 8 – replace the previous appeal of socialist cosmopolitanism and its inherently emancipatory-assimilationist ideology. As in the 1870s, radicalized Jews continued to indulge in Akselrod’s ‘dream of a happy, united humanity’.³⁶ Yet, as we have seen throughout this study, this ideology of salvation was uniquely Jewish in origin and expression. It was the product of an alienated and marginal intelligentsia which attached itself to a movement that gave them a sense of belonging and kinship, which was cemented by comradeship and a mutually shared aspiration to

abolish the old order and with it all that seemed to be contrary to the realization of an emancipated humanity.

That this movement happened to be Russian revolutionary Populism need not surprise us. Until the rise of social-democratic and liberal alternatives in the 1890s, this was the only possible choice for radicalized Jews, who, having lost faith in Judaic forms of life, searched for a mode of existence outside of conventional Jewish and Russian society. But the fact that Populism was essentially a Russian socio-cultural phenomenon does not imply, as historians have persistently argued, that its Jewish following was for all practical purposes devoid of any Jewish motives; that, consequently, there was nothing Jewish in a Populist Jew's behaviour and thinking as a Russian revolutionary; and that therefore Jews could and would not have had an influence on the development of the movement attributable to their Jewishness. None of these generalizations can be maintained in the light of what we have learned about Jewish revolutionary involvement in the nihilist 1860s, the Populist 1870s and 1880s.

The lives and careers of revolutionary Jews portrayed in these pages show time and again that Jewishness was a vital factor in shaping their ideas and activities as participants in the revolutionary movement, and thus extended in significance far beyond the accident of birth or incidental years of childhood in Jewish surroundings. Both on a subconscious and conscious level, their Jewish origin – whether in terms of upbringing, cultural influence, social conflict, self-perception, psychological make-up or personal aspirations – played an important role in their radicalization and apprehension of socialist doctrines and practices. Naturally, this process took place in a Populist ideological context and a Russian socio-political reality. Neither, however, transformed Jews into typical Russian Populists to the extent that, in Leonard Schapiro's words, 'it seems impossible to extract any specifically Jewish motives which actuated these revolutionaries ... [whose] whole mode of action and thought became assimilated to a specifically Russian form and tradition'.³⁷ This, clearly, does not conform to our findings and characterization of socialist Jews; their cosmopolitanism, Westernism, and political minimalism contrasted markedly with the Russian particularism, romantic peasantism, and social-revolutionary maximalism of their Populist comrades. Indeed, the Jewish Populist was largely an atypical phenomenon in the Russian movement. Much like the 'Constitutionalist' Peretts and the 'Marxist' Utin before him, he tended to look westward for political and socialist inspirations, and often found them in German Social Democracy, in the idea of an international proletariat, and in the short-term benefits of bourgeois liberalism. That

this should have been the case was invariably related to Jewish aspects in his mentality which attracted him to a Western form of socio-political progress, and to a German social-democratic pattern of socialist idealism and activism. This was very different from the Populist ethos of the average Russian revolutionary, who related negatively to the renegade 'bourgeois socialism' of German Social Democrats and, instead, sought his salvation in the Russian peasantry.³⁸

Yet, although this might sound contradictory, Russian Populism was not as monolithic a *Weltanschauung* as to prevent Jews from fully participating in the revolutionary movement. Steeped as it may have been in 'Slav nationalism and peasant tradition',³⁹ Populism was also permeated with Western socialist tradition. And it was this latter tradition which appealed to Jewish radicals and which, moreover, they themselves helped to further significantly by politicizing the movement and introducing 'heretical' social-democratic ideas. In short, Jews looked upon Populism as a Russian version of international socialism to which they were attracted, in the first place, because it held out the promise, like Russian Marxism later on, of emancipating mankind through the creation of a workers republic governed by the principles of the 'holy trinity' – equality, fraternity, and liberty. And in acting as if Populism was merely a Russian form of a world-wide socialist creed, they, in fact, exercised a *Westernizing* influence on the movement which manifested itself clearly in Natanson's 'party-political' imprint on the Chaikovskii circle and Zemlia i Volia, in Ginzberg's transformation of the St Petersburg Lavrovists into quasi-social democrats, in Zundeleovich's constitutionally motivated advocacy of political terrorism in the councils of Narodnaia Volia, and in Akselrod's largely successful attempt to purge Chernyi Peredel of its 'Slavophil medievalism' in order to emphasize the party's 'ideological connection with the "federated international"''.⁴⁰

This *ideo-political* influence of Jews, which from the very beginning contributed substantially to the rise of liberal-constitutional and social-democratic tendencies in revolutionary Populism, was all the more persuasive because 'generals' like Natanson, Ginzburg, Zundeleovich, Bakh, Bogoraz, and Orzhikh, as well as their 'second-rank' fellow Jews, were accomplished conspirators in organizing the 'revolutionary army' and creating its technical infrastructure of headquarters, communications, escape and transportation routes abroad, underground printing presses and the like. Their *techno-organizational* contribution, which, to paraphrase Schapiro, kept the wheels of revolutionary organizations turning,⁴¹ was as much – and even more visibly – connected to their Jewishness as their Western influence. As sons and daughters of Jewish

merchants, shopkeepers and, on rare occasions, contrabandists, they learned from early on to balance accounts and find ingenious ways for making a living under perilous conditions. Hence Natanson's business-like approach to revolutionary affairs, Epshtein's contacts with Jewish smugglers, Zundeleovich's parsimony in handling money entrusted to him, and Ginzberg's ingenuity in dealing with the financial problems of *Vpered!*.

Equally important was the fact that they could rely for their work on numerous circles of Jewish radicals who in places like Minsk, Vilna, Belostok, and Kovno manned the 'postal stations' of the movement. Growing up and residing in the Pale of Settlement, these youngsters were 'specialists' in exploiting the conditions on Russia's western frontiers for organizing illegal transports of literature and all kinds of other ventures without which the Chaikovtsy, Lavrovists, Zemlevoltsy, Chernopereveltsy, and Narodovoltsy would not have been able to maintain links with Western Europe or operate effectively within Russia. By the same token, however, these indispensable Jewish technicians and organizers of the revolutionary underground were the very same people who, due to their Jewish background that was often matched with a German cultural affiliation of maskilic vintage, influenced Populism in non-Populist ways. Here the characteristically Jewish traits, which made them superb practitioners of revolution and cosmopolitan socialists, combined in a fashion which inevitably left its mark on the organizational and ideological evolution of the Russian revolutionary movement.

As exemplified by Akselrod and Zundeleovich in chapters 7 and 8, the techno-organizational aptitude of the Jewish activist was so much appreciated that his comrades were ready to listen to, or at worse ignore, his unorthodox 'foreign opinions'. Less obvious, but more subtle was the way in which the Jewish-tinted politics of Natanson – his organizational imperative and agitational pragmatism – set the movement on a political course of action which led it away from its single-minded pursuits of social revolution and peasant socialism. Nor should we forget the pioneering role of Ginzburg, who, in opposing Natanson's party-political platform, committed his Lavrovist following to an equally a-Populist activity in adopting German social-democratic methods of propaganda, which, although premature in their application to Russia, nonetheless marked the beginning of a Russian labour movement free of Populist tutelage.

No longer premature, however, was the quasi-social-democratic activity of nominally Populist Jews in the mid-1880s in places such as Minsk, Vilna, Kiev, Odessa, and Ekaterinoslav. While giving material and logistical support to the terrorist movement, their actual work as

Narodovoltsy, and sometimes as left-over Chernoperedeltsy, consisted primarily of propagandizing workers in terms of Marxist ideology.⁴² Hence, as Populist epigones, they were already pioneers of Social Democracy in Russia. They, in other words, were the teachers of that generation of Jewish *intelligenty* and workers who in the 1890s brought forth the Bund and simultaneously helped to get Russian Social Democracy on its feet by indoctrinating and organizing non-Jewish workers both within the Pale of Settlement and outside it.⁴³

Summing up the role of Jews in Russian revolutionary Populism, it is fair to say that the collusion of specifically Jewish traits and motifs in radical Jews strengthened the movement in the 1870s, gave it staying power in the 1880s, and pioneered revolutionary developments in the 1890s. But in making this contribution, Jews, as already apparent in Grigorii Peretts' Decembrist activity and Nikolai Utin's anti-Bakuninism, generally acted and thought in a fashion that was neither politically nor ideologically congruent with Russian revolutionary thinking in general and orthodox Populist principles in particular. Finally, in line with this tendency, they proved to be the vanguard – and often the actual leaders – of a new epoch in Russian revolutionary history, which saw the formation of a Marxist labour movement on the one hand, and, on the other, the creation of a reformed Populist party at the turn of the century. The Jewish role in the latter, the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries (PSR), is particularly intriguing because it suggests that the Jewish motives which were operational in the Populist context of the seventies and eighties were still powerful enough to allow for the identification of many Jews with the neo-Populism of subsequent decades; and this even though Marxism and/or Zionism would seem to have been more congenial in attracting and satisfying the existential and spiritual yearnings of an uprooted and secularized Jewish intelligentsia. Although the prominent presence of Jews in the PSR, especially in its leadership, has been recognized by historians,⁴⁴ no sustained attempt has been made yet to attend in detail to the reasons why Mark Natanson, Mikhail Gots, Osip Minor, Abram Bakh, Ilia Fundaminskii, Ilia Rubanovich, Chaim Zhitlovskii, Semen Anskii, and many others chose to fulfil their revolutionary calling in a Populist party, and why they played such an important role in its organizational and ideological evolution.

Appendix

Table 1 *Populist activists arrested and prosecuted, 1873–1876*

Groups	Total number of people arrested	Jews arrested	Percentage of Jews
I ^a	525	23	4.4
II ^b	79	12	15.2
III ^c	450	33	7.3
Subtotal	1,054	68	6.5
IV ^d	557	21	3.8
Total	1,611	89	5.5

Source: The figures in the table are obtained from the text and statistical appendix of M. M. Merkulov's report on revolutionary activity in the empire between 1873–76/77 as published by N. I. Sidorov ('Statisticheskie svedeniia'). It was compiled by the Third Department for a special government commission to investigate the spread of revolutionary propaganda as manifested by the *v narod* movement of 1874–75.

^a The crime of people in this group was serious enough and sufficiently proven to allow for their judicial prosecution.

^b Although the people in this category were also seriously implicated in 'criminal activity', they could not be prosecuted judicially because of insufficient evidence and, therefore, had to be dealt with administratively – i.e., they were to be exiled to far-away provinces and put under police surveillance.

^c Persons in this group had not yet participated actively in the propagation of 'criminal ideas', but were already preparing themselves for it. They were to be subjected to administrative penalties and police surveillance at their place of residence. (This group also included minors who because of their youth were spared from exile).

^d The last group consisted of people against whom all proceedings had been stopped without any further consequences since they belonged to that 'amorphous mass, that element' which was relatively harmless.

Table 2 *Defendants at political trials 1880–1891*

Years	Total	(female)	Jews	(female)	% Jews	% (female) ^a
1880	171	(22)	22	(4)	12.9	(18.2)
1881	41	(7)	1	(= 1)	2.4	(14.3)
1882	76	(5)	5	(-)	6.6	(-)
1883	59	(9)	10	(3)	16.9	(33.3)
1884	36	(5)	3	(2)	8.3	(40.0)
1885	8	(-)	1	(-)	12.5	(-)
1886	14	(3)	3	(1)	21.4	(33.3)
1887	84	(10)	15	(4)	17.9	(40.0)
1888	23	(-)	1	(-)	4.3	(-)
1889	35	(8)	24	(7)	68.6	(87.5)
1890	10	(1)	2	(1)	20	(100.0)
1891	9	(2)	1	(= 1)	11.1	(50.0)
1880–91	566	(72)	88	(24)	15.5	(33.3)
		m/f = 12.7 %		m/f = 27.3 %		

Source : The data for this table are from N. A. Troitskii's statistical appendix to his work, *Narodnaia Volia*, 164–99. Of the 566 revolutionaries tried, 295 were affiliated with *Narodnaia Volia*. Of these 61 or 20.7 per cent were Jewish, including 19 women (i.e., 31.1 per cent of Jewish *Narodovoltsy* which is slightly higher than their overall ratio of 27.3 per cent). The percentage of Jewish women among revolutionary Jews was throughout 1870–90 consistently and significantly higher than that of the general male/female ratio in the movement, which for the 1870s was approximately 17 per cent, but for Jews 23.5 per cent (see, Orlov, 'Statistical Analysis', 6).

^a This percentage designates the Jewish ratio among women revolutionaries (not to be confused with the percentage of females in the Jewish cohort).

Table 3 *Narodovoltsy activists 1879–1892*

Years	Total	(female)	Jews	(female)	% Jews	% (female)
1879	23	(4)	7	(1)	30.4	(25.0)
1880	82	(10)	11	(1)	13.4	(10.0)
1881	163	(22)	19	(4)	11.7	(18.2)
1882	208	(35)	21	(4)	10.1	(11.4)
1883	201	(32)	24	(8)	11.9	(25.0)
1884	275	(39)	45	(13)	16.4	(33.3)
1885	226	(27)	24	(7)	10.6	(25.9)
1886	217	(35)	44	(11)	20.3	(31.4)
1887	473	(82)	99	(19)	20.9	(23.2)
1888	62	(9)	17	(4)	27.4	(44.4)
1889	157	(30)	41	(17)	26.1	(56.7)
1890	89	(19)	15	(6)	16.9	(31.6)
1891	3	(-)	-	(-)	-	(-)
1892	14	(4)	5	(-)	35.7	(-)
1879–92	2193	(348)	372	(95)	17.0	(27.3)
		m/f = 15.9 %		m/f = 25.5 %		

Source : The figures for this table are from a list of Narodovoltsy active in 1879–1896 ('Uchastniki narodovol'cheskogo dvizheniia', *Narodovol'tsy*, 3: 289–314). Although scanty in information (for instance, nationality is not indicated), this compilation is a valuable source in measuring Jewish participation in the movement in so far as it usually lists the full name (first name, patronymic, and family name) of activists and the year in which they ended their revolutionary career in Russia due to arrest, emigration or death.

Abbreviations

<i>DBS</i>	<i>Deiateli revoliutsionnogo dvizhenia v Rossii. Bio-bibliograficheskii slovar'</i>
<i>EE</i>	<i>Evreiskaia entsiklopediia</i>
<i>Granat</i>	<i>Entsiklopedicheskii slovar' Granat</i>
<i>Gruppa</i>	<i>Gruppa 'Osvobozhdenie truda'</i>
<i>HS</i>	<i>Historishe shriftn</i>
<i>IRS</i>	<i>Istoriko-revoliutsionnyi sbornik</i>
<i>IRSH</i>	<i>International Review of Social History</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Jahrbücher für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik</i>
<i>KA</i>	<i>Krasnyi arkhiv</i>
<i>KS</i>	<i>Katorga i ssylka</i>
<i>SEER</i>	<i>The Slavonic and East European Review</i>
<i>SR</i>	<i>Slavic Review</i>

Notes

INTRODUCTION: THE BEGINNINGS OF RUSSIAN-JEWISH RADICALISM, 1790-1868

- 1 Cited by E. Zunser, *A Jewish Bard. Being the Biography of Elias Zunser*, ed. A. H. Fromenson (New York, 1905), 32. For more about the Finkelshtein circle, see chapter 4.
- 2 H. Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire 1801-1907* (Oxford, 1967), 197.
- 3 A. G. Mazour, *The First Russian Revolution 1825* (Berkeley, 1937), xvii, 271-72; M. Raeff, *The Decembrist Movement* (Englewood, NJ, 1966), 26-29.
- 4 The two principal works on Peretts are: Ia. D. Baum, 'Evrei-dekabrist', *KS*, 25 (1926): 97-128; and V. N. and L. N. Peretts, *Dekabrist Grigorii Abramovich Peretts* (Moscow, 1926). He is also mentioned in *DBS*, I-1: 142.
- 5 Baum, 'Evrei-dekabrist', 105.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 105-6, 106, n. 1.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 105. Pertinent testimonies are reproduced on 115, 119, 121-28, and in Peretts, *Dekabrist*, 46-112.
- 8 Baum, 'Evrei-dekabrist', 107-8, 107, n. 1.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 106-7.
- 10 On 30 December 1825 Peretts addressed a nine-point statement to Nicholas I outlining what he considered necessary reforms for Russia (Baum, 'Evrei-dekabrist', 114-15).
- 11 J. Meisl, *Haskalah. Geschichte der Aufklärungsbewegung unter den Juden in Russland* (Berlin, 1919), 40-42; J. S. Raisin, *The Haskalah Movement in Russia* (Philadelphia, 1913), 118-19. On Tseitlin specifically, see S. Tsitron, *Shtadlonim* (Warsaw, 1926), 28-51, as well as a short, but informative, biobibliographical note in *EE*, 15: 789-90.
- 12 Baum, 'Evrei-dekabrist', 98-99.
- 13 For the work of the Committee and the role of Peretts, Notkin, and Nevakhovich, see: I. Gessen, *Istoriia evreiskogo naroda v Rossii*, 2 vols. (Leningrad, 1925-27), I: 138-45, 158, and in *EE*, 7: 102-4; S. M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia, 1916-20), I: 335-42, 386-88; and, more recently, J. Klier, *Russia Gathers her Jews* (Dekalb, IL, 1986), 117-43.
- 14 Dubnow, *History of the Jews*, I, 388.
- 15 Baum, 'Evrei-dekabrist', 101.
- 16 Klier, *Russia Gathers her Jews*, 135-45, 183-84.
- 17 Dubnow, *History of the Jews*, I, 388.

- 18 M. Stanislawski, *Tsar Nicholas I and the Jews* (Philadelphia, 1983), 188.
- 19 For other factors contributing to the consolidation of the Haskalah, before and after the introduction of Jewish state schools, see: Stanislawski, *Nicholas I*; E. Lederhendler, *The Road to Modern Jewish Politics* (Oxford, 1989); and E. Haberer, 'Haskalah and the Roots of Jewish Radicalism in Nineteenth Century Russia', in M. Mor, ed., *Jewish Sects, Religious Movements, and Political Parties* (Omaha, 1992): 122–47.
- 20 Cited by Stanislawski, *Nicholas I*, 67.
- 21 Ibid., 98–101; Gessen, *Istoriia*, II: 119–21.
- 22 Stanislawski, *Nicholas I*, 186–87.
- 23 Ibid., 108–9. For a critical assessment of the new school system in connection with other 'institutional clusters' contributing to the consolidation of the Haskalah, see Lederhendler, *Modern Jewish Politics*, 111–33.
- 24 I. Berlin, *Russian Thinkers* (New York, 1979), 117. On the Russian intelligentsia, see also P. Pomper, *The Russian Revolutionary Intelligentsia* (Arlington Heights, IL, 1970); M. Raeff, *Origins of the Russian Intelligentsia* (New York, 1966); R. Pipes, ed., *The Russian Intelligentsia* (New York, 1961). For a dissenting voice regarding the concept of intelligentsia, see D. Brower, *Training the Nihilists* (London, 1975), 33–39.
- 25 M. Morgulis, 'Iz moikh vospominanii', *Voskhod*, 15 (1895), no. 2: 116, cited in Stanislawski, *Nicholas I*, 108–9.
- 26 G. Gurevich, 'Zapiski otshchepentsa', *Voskhod*, 4 (1884), no. 5: 14.
- 27 For an excellent analysis of Russian society during the reform era, see W. B. Lincoln, *The Great Reforms* (Dekalb, 1990).
- 28 At this time military service was twenty-five years. For a detailed account of juvenile conscription under Nicholas I, see Stanislawski, *Nicholas I*, 13–34, and Lederhendler, *Modern Jewish Politics*, 64–68.
- 29 E. Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern in rusland in di 60er un 70er yorn', *HS*, 3 (1939): 63.
- 30 L. Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia*, 2 volumes (New York, 1976), I: 83; Gessen, *Istoriia*, II, 179, and in *EE*, 13: 49–50. For the gymnasiums and progymnasiums located in the Pale of Settlement these figures translated in the case of the Odessa school district to 286 Jews (11.7 per cent) in 1863 and 2,724 or almost 30 per cent of all students in 1885. Less staggering, but still impressive was their increase in the districts of Vilna and Kiev which, in 1884, reached 24 and 12.4 per cent respectively. In fact, some schools turned out to be predominantly Jewish, as for example the 2nd Odessa Gymnasium and the Kherson Gymnasium where Jews made up more than 75 per cent of the student body (*EE*, 13: 50).
- 31 *EE*, 13: 50; Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 64, 112.
- 32 Dubnow, *History of the Jews*, II, 215.
- 33 A. Vucinich, *Social Thought in Tsarist Russia* (Chicago and London, 1976), 2. See also E. Lampert's critical comments on comparing the Russian 'nihilist renaissance' with the European Enlightenment of the eighteenth century (*Sons Against Fathers* (Oxford, 1965), 89).
- 34 After the publication of *Fathers and Sons* in 1862 the term 'nihilism' was routinely equated with political radicalism and remained in use throughout the nineteenth century, with the terms 'nihilist' and 'revolutionary' being used interchangeably.

- 35 Vucinich, *Social Thought*, 4–5.
- 36 The particular appeal of Pisarev was related to the fact that, as Lampert noted, there was ‘more of the Enlightenment’ in his writings than in Chernyshevsky’s and Nikolai Dobroliubov’s, and that his ‘Westernism’ was more pronounced than their’s (*Sons Against Fathers*, 280–81, 284–85, 296–97, 322).
- 37 Vucinich, *Social Thought*, 3–5.
- 38 Gurevich, ‘Zapiski’, no. 5: 19–22; P. B. Aksel’rod, *Perezhitoe i peredumannoe* (Berlin, 1923), 54–55; L. Deich, *Rol’ evreev v russkom revoliutsionnom dvizhenii* (Berlin, 1923), 28–34, and Deich, *Za polveka*, 2 volumes (Berlin, 1923), I, 19–23.
- 39 The term, ‘school of dissent’, was coined by Brower (*Training the Nihilists*, especially chapters 5 and 6).
- 40 Pomper, *Revolutionary Intelligentsia*, 89.
- 41 A. B. Ulam, *In the Name of the People* (New York, 1977), 144.
- 42 *DBS*, I-2. Tscherikower lists seventeen Jews, and mentions another two apparently connected with the Moscow ‘Vertepniki’ (‘Yidn-revolutsionern’, 79–80, 92).
- 43 F. Venturi, *Roots of Revolution* (New York, 1966), 234; P. A. Taubin, ‘Ia.N. Bekman i Khar’kovsko-Kievskoe tainoe obshchestvo’, in *Revoliutsionnaia situatsiia v Rossii v 1859–1861 gg.*, ed. M. V. Nechkina (Moscow, 1963), III, 406. For bio-bibliographical information on Portugalov and Zelenskii, see: Tscherikower, ‘Yidn-revolutsionern’, 81; and *DBS*, I-2: 138, 330–32.
- 44 Venturi, *Roots*, 235.
- 45 Taubin, ‘Bekman’, 407–14. For a good rendering of the Sunday-School movement, see R. E. Zelnick, ‘The Sunday School Movement in Russia, 1859–1862’, *Journal of Modern History*, 37 (June 1965): 151–70.
- 46 The three Jews in question were: Iona Zindelevich Katsen, Grigori Rozen, and Iakov Shmulevich (*DBS*, I-2: 162, 353, 472). Also arrested and imprisoned in connection with the Bekman affair was the Moscow Jewish student Zinovii Iukel’zon (*DBS*, I-2: 485–86).
- 47 In this, as well as his petitions for more student funding, Portugalov was also supported by Zelenskii (see Tscherikower, ‘Yidn-revolutsionern’, 81).
- 48 Deich, *Za polveka*, I (Berlin, 1923), 25–26.
- 49 Tscherikower, ‘Yidn-revolutsionern’, 91–92; *DBS*, I-2: 25–26.
- 50 Pomper, *Revolutionary Intelligentsia*, 81.
- 51 Their names are listed in *DBS*, I-2: 419–20 (Evgenii Utin), 38 (Iosif Beriman), 52 (Aleksandr Iakovlevich Brakhovich), 211 (Anton Gabrilovich Levental’), 289–90 (Mark Akimovich Novoselitskii), 431 (Aleksandr and Leontii Semenovich Frenkel’).
- 52 Venturi, *Roots*, 273.
- 53 L. F. Panteleev, *Iz vospominanii proshlogo* (St. Petersburg, 1905), 284; Tscherikower, ‘Yidn-revolutsionern’, 83–84, 91–92; S. Livshits, ‘Podpolnye tipografii 60-x, 70-x i 80-x godov’, *KS*, 41 (1928): 29–30.
- 54 Panteleev, *Iz vospominanii proshlogo*, 288, see as well 252–61 and 284–85.
- 55 Sh.M. Levin, *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii v 60–70-e gody XIX veka* (Moscow, 1958), 210–11.
- 56 Tscherikower, ‘Yidn-revolutsionern’, 92; *DBS*, II-2: 211.

- 57 Cf. L. Schapiro, 'The Role of the Jews in the Russian Revolutionary Movement', *SEER*, 40 (1961/2), 40: 150. The Utin–Bakunin conflict has been well documented by A. P. Mendel, *Michael Bakunin. The Roots of Apocalypse* (New York, 1981), 313–84. See also Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 85–88, and Panteleev, *Iz vospominanii proshlogo*, 313–14.
- 58 Mendel, *Bakunin*, 311–12.
- 59 This observation has also been made by V. and L. Peretts. Contrasting Grigorii's rootedness in the Jewish world of his childhood and adolescence with the non-Jewish upbringing and education of his numerous step-brothers from his father's second marriage, they attribute his attraction to Decembrist revolutionary ideals to his exposure to Jewish enlightenment literature and the predicament of Jewish life in Russia. Conversely, none of his step-brothers was drawn to any sort of radicalism (*Dekabrist*, 13–15).
- 60 Cited in Mendel, *Bakunin*, 331, 354; see also 381–86, 416 for Bakunin's antisemitic attacks against the 'Hebraic–Germanic' wing of the International.
- 61 In this study the term Populism, *narodnichestvo* (from *narod*, 'people') has been reserved exclusively to connote the narrow, classical meaning of Populism, which coincides chronologically with the 1870s. Where the term is used in a different sense, the context or qualifying adjectives indicate particular meanings (for instance, 'nihilist Populism'). For the narrow and broad meaning of Populism see respectively: R. Pipes, 'Narodnichestvo: A Semantic Enquiry', *SR*, 23 (1964): 441–58; and A. Walicki, *The Controversy over Capitalism: Studies in the Social Philosophy of Russian Populists* (Oxford, 1969). See also Offord's informative chapter on revolutionary Populism in his book *The Russian Revolutionary Movement in the 1880s* (Cambridge, 1986), 1–35.

PART 1 THE CHAIKOVSKII CIRCLES: JEWISH RADICALS IN THE FORMATIVE STAGE OF RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONARY POPULISM, 1868–1875

- 1 P. Pomper, *Sergei Nechaev* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1979), 45; Venturi, *Roots*, 354.
- 2 Venturi, *Roots*, 470.

2 JEWISH STUDENT ACTIVISTS IN ST PETERSBURG

- 1 P. L. Alston, *Education and the State in Tsarist Russia* (Stanford, 1969), 99.
- 2 L. B. Gol'denberg, 'Vospominaniia', *KS*, 10 (1924): 103–5. According to Goldenberg the Poles refused to participate because of 'national-political reasons'.
- 3 Shapiro was sentenced to two years of exile in Novgorod. Upon his release he returned to St Petersburg and was known as a supporter of the Chaikovskii circle and, later on, of Zemlia i Volia. Aaron Bomash was expelled from the university and exiled to the interior (B. P. Koz'min, *Nechaev i nechaevtsy* (Moscow, 1931), 198, 221; *DBS*, I-2: 461 [Shapiro]; N. A. Charushin, *Detstvo i v gimnazii. Kruzhok chaikovtsev* (Moscow, 1926), 167–68; Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 126, n. 240).

- 4 For Chudnovskii's and Goldenberg's involvement with the Nechaevists, and Goldenberg's career with the printing of popular socialist literature and the Chaikovskyst press in Geneva, see E. Haberer, 'The Role of Jews in Russian Revolutionary Populism, 1868–1887', Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Toronto, 1987, 8–15.
- 5 In B. P. Koz'min, 'S. G. Nechaev i ego protivniki v 1868–1869 gg.', in B. I. Gorev and B. P. Koz'min, eds., *Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie 1860-kh godov* (Moscow, 1932), 182. In this article Kozmin cites the complete version of Natanson's autobiographical conspectus (182–84) henceforth cited as 'Conspectus'.
- 6 [N. A. Morozov], 'Ocherk istorii kruzhka chaikovtsev', in B. S. Itenberg, ed., *Revoliutsionnoe narodnichestvo*, I (Moscow 1964), 212; N. V. Chaikovskii, 'Cherez pol stoletia', *Golos minuvshago na chuzhnoi storone*, XVI: 3 (Paris, 1926): 180.
- 7 O. V. Aptekman, *Obshchestvo 'Zemlia i Volia' 70-kh gg. Po lichnym vospominaniiam* (Petrograd, 1924), 61.
- 8 'Conspectus', 182.
- 9 From Natanson's conspectus it is evident that he moved in liberal circles. At least by implication, he was labelled a 'constitutionalist' by D. Klements who told P. Kropotkin in 1872 that the members of the Chaikovskii circle 'have hitherto been mostly constitutionalists' (cited by Kropotkin, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist* (Gloucester, MA, 1967), 200).
- 10 'Conspectus', 183.
- 11 Ibid. See also Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 68; and Pomper, *Nechaev*, 116–17.
- 12 'Conspectus', 183. Natanson himself did not participate in this 'research', but went home to see his family. There, in the summer of 1869, he spent his time reading Owen and Fourier, and – for the first time – Marx.
- 13 For a characterization of the commune, see Brower, *Training the Nihilists*, 223–24; and B. A. Engel, *Mothers & Daughters* (Cambridge, 1983), 117–18.
- 14 'Conspectus', 184;
- 15 I. E. Deniker, 'Vospominaniia', *KS*, 11 (1924): 24, 25–27. Gertsenshtein played a prominent role in the Natanson circle, though he was expelled eventually for 'insincerity' ([Morozov], 'Ocherk', 210, 215; see also *DBS*, I-2: 81–82, and Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 126 n. 240).
- 16 'Conspectus', 184.
- 17 Ibid. See also Koz'min, 'Nechaev i ego protivniki', 187.
- 18 Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 68. Cf. Koz'min, *Nechaevtsy*, 135–37.
- 19 Cited in Koz'min, 'Nechaev i ego protivniki', 181, 187–88.
- 20 Ia. D. B[aum], ed., 'Programma dlia kruzhov samoobrazovaniia i prakticheskoi deiatel'nosti', *KS*, 67 (1930): 89–106. Although there is as yet no conclusive proof that Natanson himself wrote the programme, the content and style is so typically Natanson's that it is difficult to see who else could have composed or, to say the least, supervised its composition (cf. N. A. Troitskii, 'O pervoi programme revoliutsionnogo narodnichestva 1870-kh godov', *Voprosy istorii*, 6 (1961): 208–10).
- 21 Baum, 'Programma', 95–96, 98–100.
- 22 This is clearly evident in the introductory, ideological section of the programme (ibid., 95–97).

- 23 Ibid., 96–97.
- 24 Ibid., 98.
- 25 Ibid., 97–98 (Natanson's italics).
- 26 Ibid., 97.
- 27 For Lavrov's concept of a 'party', see *Historical Letters* (Berkeley, 1967), 171–81, as well as Scanlan's introduction (ibid., 47), and P. Pomper, *Peter Lavrov and the Russian Revolutionary Movement* (Chicago, 1972), 104–5.
- 28 In the literature of the 1870s, as well as in memoirs relating to this period, the terms movement and party were used synonymously denoting an informal group of people who shared similar aspirations and sometimes acted accordingly, though not necessarily in a coordinated or organized fashion. The real distinction was between movement and organization. But until the creation of Zemlia i Volia, even the concept of an organization with a formalized, functional structure of operation and command was neither in existence nor was it considered desirable in the aftermath of *Nechaevshchina* (cf. Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoe*, 315–16; and A. P. Pribyleva and V. N. Figner, *Narodovolets Aleksandr Dmitrievich Mikhailov* (Leningrad, 1925), 43–45, 48 n. 3).
- 29 Baum, 'Programma', 97.
- 30 Troitskii, 'O pervoi programme', 209; Koz'min, 'Nechaev i ego protivniki', 218. See also R. V. Filippov, *Iz istorii narodnicheskogo dvizheniia na pervom etape 'Khozheniia v narod' (1863–1874)* (Petrozavodsk, 1967), 118–86.
- 31 N. A. Troitskii, *Bol'shoe obshchestvo propagandy 1871–74* (Saratov, 1963), 50–53.
- 32 Although in *DBS* (II-3: 1002–3) he is listed as a native of Sventsiana (Vilna province) – and even of Vilna by O. V. Aptekman ('Dve dorogie teni', *Byloe*, 16 (1921): 8) – Kovno was most likely his hometown (see: Deich, *Rol'*, 256; 'Conspectus', 182–84; [Morozov], 'Ocherk', 211, n. 7).
- 33 [Morozov], 'Ocherk', 210. Here Morozov refers to him as a 'Jew and former talmudist', probably meaning that he studied the Talmud as a pupil of the *gemoreh kheder*. He certainly did not attend the yeshiva.
- 34 On the *musar* movement and its potential as 'fertile ground for the sowing of advanced social ideas', see Greenberg, *Jews in Russia*, I, 65–68.
- 35 D. Patterson, *Abraham Mapu – The Creator of the Modern Hebrew Novel* (London, 1969), 90. For the influence of his 'heretical' writings on the local Jewish youth, see *EE*, 10: 612–13; and Pauline Wengeroff, *Memoiren einer Grossmutter*, II, (Berlin, 1922), 146–48. Natanson's 'Mapu connection' is mentioned in [Morozov], 'Ocherk', 210.
- 36 Pomper, *Revolutionary Intelligentsia*, 76.
- 37 Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 202.
- 38 Ibid.; Deich, *Rol'*, 29–34, 256–57, 261–62; [Morozov], 'Ocherk', 210–11.
- 39 Chaikovskii, 'Cherez pol stoletiiia', 181. For a similar viewpoint, see also [Morozov], 'Ocherk', 210–11, and Venturi, *Roots*, 473.
- 40 This amalgamation is strikingly evident in his programme (Baum, 'Programma', especially on page 98).
- 41 Pomper, *Peter Lavrov*, 107. As J. Frankel noted, Lavrov's 'secularized version of the concepts of collective guilt and repentance through good works' was 'readily comprehensible to the Jewish youth familiar with

- Orthodox Judaism which places great emphasis on the ideas of vicarious responsibilities and collective atonement' ('Socialism and Jewish Nationalism in Russia, 1892–1907', Ph.D. Dissertation, Cambridge University, 1961, 42).
- 42 Pomper, *Revolutionary Intelligentsia*, 77.
 - 43 Ibid.; Baum, 'Programma', 97.
 - 44 [Morozov], 'Ocherk', 216.
 - 45 Ibid., 216–17.
 - 46 A. Kornilova-Moroz, 'Perovskaia i osnovanie kruzha chaikovskykh', *KS*, 22 (1926): 16–17; see also S. Tsederbaum [V. Ezgov], *Zhenshchina v russkom revoliutsionnom dvizhenii 1870–1905* (Moscow, 1927), 15–16. For a good account of the 'women's circle' and its relationship with the Natansonovtsy, see Engel, *Mothers and Daughters*, chapter 6.
 - 47 Chaikovsky, 'Cherez pol stoletia', 182. For example, Vladimir Perovsky is shown translating from *Das Kapital* when he visited his sister at the commune (Perovsky, 'Moi vospominaniia', *KS*, 16 [1925]: 14).
 - 48 Chaikovsky, 'Cherez pol stoletia', 181.
 - 49 Kornilova-Moroz, 'Perovskaia', 28.
 - 50 Charushin, *Detstvo*, 92–93; [Morozov], 'Ocherk', 211; Chaikovsky, 'Cherez pol stoletia', 180–81.
 - 51 On transferring the 'organization of *knizhnoe delo*' to Chaikovsky, see: Chaikovsky, 'Cherez pol stoletia', 181–82, 186; Kornilova-Moroz, 'Perovskaia', 29–30; [Morozov], 'Ocherk', 232. In critical comments on Lev Deich's draft version of *Rol'*, Pavel Akselrod wrote: 'speaking about the men of the 1860s and 1870s objectively, Natanson ... would have to be ranked among the most outstanding organizers and *initiators* [sic] of the movement. Really, the originator of that circle of Chaikovskys was precisely he himself [*byl imenno on*]. In 1875 Klements told me that compared with him, Chaikovsky was a baby [*mladentsem*]' ('P. B. Akselrod-L. G. Deichu', (approx. date, summer, 1913), Letter, Dom Plekhanova, Fond no. 1097, A. D. 2/37.30).
 - 52 'Conspectus', 182. N. K. Lopatin should not be confused with his more famous revolutionary namesake German Aleksandrovich Lopatin. While nothing is known about his role, Aleksandrov's contribution to the circle's early development and its *knizhnoe delo* has been largely ignored in the literature. Though it is obvious that, on the whole, his influence was minimal in comparison to Natanson's. Besides his mismanagement of the Chaikovskyst press in Switzerland where he was replaced by Lazar Goldenberg, he soon lost all credibility and was eventually expelled from the circle in 1872. About Aleksandrov and his failings, see Sh.M. Levin's comments in Deniker, 'Vospominaniia', 37, n. 5, and [Morozov], 'Ocherk', passim 210–37.
 - 53 Sokolov's *Otshepentsy* (*Les Refractaires*) (St Petersburg, 1866) enjoyed great popularity and was particularly influential on Jewish youths.
 - 54 For Natanson's business-like approach and his ability to buy books at cheap rates and get commissions on selling large quantities, see: A. Kornilova-Moroz, *Perovskaia i kruzha chaikovskykh* (Moscow, 1929), 44; [Morozov], 'Ocherk', 212–13, 226–28; L. E. Shishko, *Sergei Mikhailovich Kravchinskii i kruzha chaikovskykh* (St Petersburg, 1906): 17–19; Deniker, 'Vospominaniia', 31.

- 55 N. Flerovskii [V. V. Bervi], *Tri politicheskiia sistemy* (London, 1897), 267; and 266–74 for an interesting description of the *knizhnoe delo*.
- 56 Charushin, *Detstvo*, 89–90.
- 57 [Morozov], ‘Ocherk’, 213.
- 58 For the tsarist authorities’ puzzlement at this new sort of subversion and its network of ‘book circles’, see Brower, *Training the Nihilists*, 203–5, and Troitskii, *Bol’shoe obshchestvo*, 93 n. 159.
- 59 Shishko, *Kravchinskii*, 17.
- 60 Baum, ‘Programma’, 97.
- 61 Cited by Troitskii, *Bol’shoe obshchestvo*, 30.
- 62 Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 202, see also 76, 78–81. The only other contemporary besides Aptekman to stress this fact was Pavel Akselrod (see n. 51). Among historians only S. Tsederbaum comes close to this interpretation. While exaggerating the role of Chaikovskii, he does recognize that the circle’s ‘inspirator, [its] ideological leader and chief organizer, was undoubtedly M. Natanson’ (*Zhenshchina*, 16).
- 63 The book in question was Bervi-Flerovskii’s *Alphabet of Social Science*. That there was truth in the official charge has been confirmed by Aptekman, who stated that Natanson advised Flerovskii to write this book and closely cooperated with him in correcting and editing the manuscript (*Obshchestvo*, 203, see also 76, 78–81).
- 64 Deich, *Rol’*, 258; S. F. Kovalik, ‘Dvizhenie semidesiatykh godov’, *Byloe*, 12 (1906): 64–65; Kornilova-Moroz, *Perovskaia*, 44–45.
- 65 Cited in Bazilevskii [V. Ia. Iakovlev], *Gosudarstvennyiia prestupleniia v Rossii v XIX veke*, III (Paris, 1905), 19.
- 66 Kornilova-Moroz, *Perovskaia*, 44–45.
- 67 Koz’mín, ‘Nechaev i ego protivniki’, 217–18; [L. A. Tikhomirov], ‘Vospominaniia’ *L’va Tikhomirova* (Moscow–Leningrad, 1927), 60. Regarding the Chaikovskii’s sense of uniqueness, see: Troitskii, *Bol’shoe obshchestvo*, 49–51, 61–73; and Charushin, *Detstvo*, 134–37, 157, 172.

3 CHAIKOVSKYIST JEWS IN MOSCOW, ODESSA, AND KIEV

- 1 Charushin, *Detstvo*, 117, 120, 143.
- 2 Ibid., 91. See also Lev Tikhomirov, who refers to Kliachko and his Russian friend N. P. Tsakni as the ‘inspirators’ (*vdokhnoviteli*) of the Moscow group (*Vospominaniia*, 57–58).
- 3 Cited in O. V. Aptekman, ‘Moskovskie revoliutsionnye kruzhki’, *Russkoe proshloe*, 2 (1923): 92.
- 4 Aptekman, ‘Moskovskie’, 2: 93.
- 5 M. A. Miller’s claim that Kliachko was actually ‘one of the delegates to the 1871 congress’ (‘Ideological Conflicts in Russian Populism’, *SR*, 29 (March 1970): 120) cannot be substantiated.
- 6 Cited in Aptekman, ‘Moskovskie’, 2: 103.
- 7 Ibid., 2: 92.
- 8 See Ia. D. Baum’s introduction to ‘Programma’, 89–91. According to

- Aptekman, Grinshtein was among those who originally formed Kliachko's University circle ('Moskovskie', 2: 89; he is also mentioned in *DBS*, II-1: 316).
- 9 *DBS*, II-2: 822–23; Aptekman, 'Moskovskie', 2: 92, 94, 97–99, 100.
 - 10 After her return from Vienna in 1875 Zinaida Lvov married Tsakni. She continued to be active in Chaikovskyist affairs until her arrest in the same year. Sentenced administratively to exile in September 1877, she escaped abroad in 1878 and died in Paris five years later (*DBS*, II-4: 1893–94; N. Tsvilenev, 'Varvara Nikolaevna Batiushkova-Tsvileneva', *KS*, 67 (1930): 148–49).
 - 11 Aptekman, 'Moskovskie', 2: 92.
 - 12 Kliachko was accused of maintaining 'criminal connections' with Russian *émigrés* in Zurich, of belonging to a 'Moscow revolutionary circle', and of 'corresponding with convicted Nechaevtsy'. Due to the lack of evidence the case was dropped, but he was kept under secret surveillance (*DBS*, II-2: 585; E. Tscher[ikower], ed., 'Fun di politsay-arkhivn in tsarishn rusland', in *HS*, 3 (Vilna, 1939), 810–11).
 - 13 This much is evident from Aptekman who cites in full a discussion paper of the circle, known as the 'Note' of V. P. Sidoratskii, dealing with the 'burning question' of constitutional government ('Moskovskie', 2: 97–100). For a short description of this document, see M. A. Miller, 'Ideological Conflicts', 12–13. Miller is wrong in calling it 'the Kliachko circle's program', since the circle had no programme of its own other than the Natanson programme of 1870–71.
 - 14 [Tikhomirov], *Vospominaniia*, 53–54; Charushin, *Detstvo*, 117.
 - 15 [Tikhomirov], *Vospominaniia*, 54. Abroad Kliachko continued to work for the revolution as an associate of Lavrov's *Vpered!* and, later on, of S. Kravchinskii's Fond of the Free Russian Press.
 - 16 Charushin, *Detstvo*, 122–23, 143–44; [Tikhomirov], *Vospominaniia*, 73–74.
 - 17 According to the *numerus clausus* of 1887, the increase of Jewish students levelled off at around 35 per cent of the total (A. Orbach, *New Voices of Russian Jewry* (Leiden, 1980), 183), though in some gymnasiums and special schools, including the university's faculty of law, their numbers remained well above this percentage (*EE*, 12: 65–66; and 13: 49–50). For Odessa Jewry during this period see also S. J. Zipperstein, *The Jews of Odessa: A Cultural History, 1794–1881* (Stanford, 1986).
 - 18 Orbach, *New Voices*, 19.
 - 19 Prior to Odessa, Chudnovskii was active in nearby Kherson, his hometown, to which he had been exiled in 1869 for his part in the St Petersburg student unrest. For his activity in Kherson which resulted in the creation of the Kherson group of Chaikovtsy, see Haberer, 'Role', 90–93.
 - 20 S. L. Chudnovskii, 'Iz dal'nikh let', *Byloe*, 10 (1907): 229–31.
 - 21 *Ibid.*, 230–32, 236–38. This new student circle disintegrated at the end of 1871 when its leaders were exiled in consequence of a student disturbance which they had caused.
 - 22 *Ibid.*, 232–33. Chudnovskii was actually injured by a flying cobblestone when a mob tried to force its way into the house of his brother who at the time was on holiday with his family. This was the first in a series of massive pogroms

- to follow in 1881, 1886, and 1905, but Odessa Jews had already experienced riots in 1821 and 1859 (J. D. Klier and S. Lambroza, eds., *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History* (Cambridge, 1992)).
- 23 Chudnovskii, 'Iz dal'nikh let', 10: 235–36.
 - 24 S. M. Berk, 'The Russian Revolutionary Movement and the Pogroms of 1881–1882', *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, 7 (1977): 36.
 - 25 Deich, *Rol'*, 107–9.
 - 26 Deich, *Za polveka* (Moscow, 1922), 18. For more on Deich's response to the 1871, as well as 1881–82 pogroms, see chapters 5 and 10.
 - 27 Chudnovskii, 'Iz dal'nikh let', 10: 239; and *Iz dal'nikh let. Vospominaniia* (Moscow, 1934), 51–52. Troitskii, *Bol'shoe obshchestvo*, 24.
 - 28 Chudnovskii, *Vospominaniia*, 50–56, 238, n. 23; [Tikhomirov], *Vospominaniia*, 73–74; Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoe*, 100.
 - 29 Chudnovskii, *Vospominaniia*, 60–61.
 - 30 Ibid., 71. Among the people visiting Chudnovskii were Lazar Goldenberg and Mikhail Kuprianov. The latter was sent by the St Petersburg Chaikovsky to buy with Chudnovskii's help a printing press at the Vienna World Fair.
 - 31 Ibid., 76, 84, 88; cf. Charushin, *Detstvo*, 123.
 - 32 Chudnovskii, *Vospominaniia*, 88, 89, 95. Returning from exile in 1893, he lived in Odessa where he was active as a journalist until his death in 1912 (*DBS*, II-4: 173–75).
 - 33 Cited in Troitskii, *Bol'shoe obshchestvo*, 39. Among them were his fellow national Anna Rozenshtein and his friend Andrei Zheliabov, who being at heart a liberal was extremely reluctant to 'join up' (Chudnovskii, *Vospominaniia*, 84–87).
 - 34 Chudnovskii, *Vospominaniia*, 79, 81.
 - 35 That Chudnovskii was 'not a typical Populist-revolutionary' has also been noted by the Soviet historian V. Korobkov in his foreword to Chudnovskii's *Vospominaniia*. Unfortunately, while his analysis of Chudnovskii's 'political physiognomy' yields many interesting observations about the latter's a-Populist disposition, it is hopelessly convoluted by Leninist terminology and Soviet historiographical cliché.
 - 36 Deich, *Rol'*, 110–11.
 - 37 Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoe*, 116–17, 245–54.
 - 38 Cited in Gurevich, 'Zikhroynes', 253–54.
 - 39 Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoe*, 32–34. For a biographical sketch of Leizer and Nakhman Levental, see Deich, *Rol'*, 241–45. For an interesting and psychologically revealing fictional description of the Levental family and the maskilic upbringing of Leizer and Nakhman, see Gurevich, 'Zapiski', 4: 4–10.
 - 40 A very touching description of how Akselrod approached the Gurevichs for support is given by G. E. Gurevich in his article 'Di iugent fun Pavel Akselrod', in *Naye tsayt*, 83 (171) (14 May 1918), 2 (deposited at YIVO, 'Papers of Grigorii Gurevich, 1880–1929', in the Elias Tscherikower Archive, file 1101, folio 86370). On Akselrod's early childhood, see his *Perezhitoe* (17–32), and his biographer, A. Ascher, *Pavel Axelrod and the Development of Menshevism* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 7–24.
 - 41 Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoe*, 43–44.

- 42 Ascher, *Axelrod*, 13.
- 43 Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoie*, 51–52, 54–55.
- 44 Ibid., 58. For an excellent characterization of the Tsukermans and their kin in Mogilev, see G. E. Gurevich, who lived just across the street from their home: 'Tsu der biografie fun L. Tsukerman', *Royter pinkos*, II (Warsaw, 1924), 112–18. See also the memoirs of Khasia Shur: *Vospominaniia* (Kursk, 1928), 31–38.
- 45 Gurevich, 'Tsu der biografie', 113. On Tsukerman's childhood, education, and early exposure to the Haskalah, see also: S. L. Tsitron [Citron], 'Leizer Tsukerman', in *Dray literarishe doyyres*, II (Vilna, 1921), 50–52; and L. G. Deich, 'Leizer Tsukerman – der beliebtester yid in der revolutsie', *Di tsukunft*, 21 (March 1916): 240–42.
- 46 [E. Tscherikower], 'Revolutionere un natsionale ideologies fun der rusish-yidisher inteligents in di 70er un 80er yorn', in E. Tscherikower, ed., *Geshikhte fun der yidisher arbeter-bavegung in di fareynikte shtatn*, II (New York, 1945), 145. That the old Tsukerman was in the habit of beating his sons, including Leizer, was known to Gurevich (see 'Tsu der biografie', 113, 114–15).
- 47 Gurevich, 'Di iugent', 2.
- 48 Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoie*, 52–56, 61–64; N. Meyzil, 'Leizer Tsukerman', *Royter pinkos*, I (Warsaw, 1921): 98–99.
- 49 Gurevich, 'Di iugent', 2.
- 50 Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoie*, 71–73.
- 51 P. B. Aksel'rod, 'O zadachakh evreisko-sotsialisticheskoi intelligentsii', in V. S. Voitinskii, et al., eds., *Iz arkhiva P. B. Aksel'roda 1881–1896* (Berlin, 1924), 217.
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoie*, 73–74, 74–75.
- 54 Lure was an old acquaintance of Akselrod from his days of 'exile' in Nezhin whither he had fled after his expulsion from Mogilev. In his list of Kievan Chaikovtsy N. A. Troitskii (*Bol'shoe obshchestvo*, 84) does not mention Shvartsman, nor does he explain – as he usually does – why he did not include her. That she was considered a member of the circle is evident from references to her in: Gurevich, 'Zikhroynes', 226, and Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoie*, 122–23.
- 55 Deich, *Rol'*, 225. For the educational background and maskilic upbringing of Lure, Shvartsman, and the Kaminer sisters, see Haberer, 'Role', 134–37.
- 56 Gurevich, 'Zikhroynes', 225–26; N. Levental', 'Semen Lur'e', *KS*, 38 (1928): 127.
- 57 Troitskii, *Bol'shoe obshchestvo*, 23; Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoie*, 101–7; Gurevich, 'Zikhroynes', 251; Levental', 'Lur'e', 123.
- 58 Levental', 'Lur'e', 126–27.
- 59 See for example Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutionern', 131–35; and Deich, *Rol'*, 53–58.
- 60 N. Levental', *Nakanune khozhdeniia v narod* (Moscow, 1927), 6; Troitskii, *Bol'shoe obshchestvo*, 39–40.
- 61 Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoie*, 96–97, 108–9; Gurevich, 'Zikhroynes', 229–30; Levental', 'Lur'e', 123–24.

- 62 Filippov, *Iz istorii*, 179–84. However, Filippov attributes this tendency solely to the influence of the St Petersburg Chaikovtsy without paying any attention to the Jewish profile of the Kiev Chaikovtsy.
- 63 Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoe*, 111, 119–23.

4 THE REBELLIOUS JEWISH YOUTH OF VILNA

- 1 N. A. Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii revoliutsionnoi propagandy sredi evreev v Rossii v 70-kh gg.', *IRS*, 1 (1924): 37–38. Finkelshtein was also known under the names of Apolon-Valentin, Abel-Apolon, Aman Abel (E)ifolit, and Litvinov. For biographical information, see especially: Z. Reijzen, *Leksikon*, 3 (Vilna, 1929): 95–99; M. Vinchevski, *Gezamlte verk*, ed. K. Marmor, X: *Erinerungen*, part 2 (New York, 1927), 119–22.
- 2 Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii', 37; P. Kon, 'Nayes vegn di ershte yidishe revolutsiionern-publitsistn', *Bikher velt*, 9 (1928): 28–29.
- 3 Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii', 38; Gurevich, 'Zikhroynes', 244, n. 1.
- 4 B. Sapir, *On the History of 'Vpered'*, in Sapir ed., 'Vpered!' 1873–1877, I (Dordrecht, 1970), 315, 334.
- 5 The information in *DBS* (III-2: 1570) that Zundelevich was born in 1854 is incorrect. As Zundelevich's biographer, A. Litvak, has clearly established, his date of birth was 4 July 1852 (*Vos geven* (Vilna, 1925), 3).
- 6 V. I. Iokhel'son, 'Dalekoe proshloe', *Byloe*, 13 (1918): 56.
- 7 Erz. [A. V. Rabinovich], 'Die Entwicklung des sozialistischen Gedankens in der hebräischen Presse Osteuropas', *JSS*, II (Zurich, 1881): 358; M. Veynreykh, 'Neye fakten vegen ershten revolutsiioneren kruzshok in vilne', *Forward* (New York), 27 May 1928. The official reason given for closing the seminaries both in Vilna and Zhitomir was the general reform of Jewish crown schools in 1873 (Iu. Gessen, 'Ravvinskaia uchilishcha v Rossii', *EE*, 13: 262). Evidence of the authorities' constant preoccupation with student dissent can be gleaned from the records of the rabbinical school preserved at the YIVO Institute (Archive, RG 24, files 24 and 115).
- 8 F. Volkhovskii, ed., 'Anna Mikhailovna Epshtein (Nekrolog)', *Letuchie listki fonda Volnoi russkoi pressy v London*, 28 (January 1896): 7. Tscherikower claims that she enrolled at the Academy only in 1872 ('Yidn-revolutsiionern', 156, n. 326). This is unlikely since she was already a resident of the *Vulfovskaia kommuna* in 1869–71 ([Morozov], 'Ocherk', 211, n. 1).
- 9 S. Stepniak [Kravchinskii, S. M.], *Podpol'naia Rossiia* (London, 1893), 136–37.
- 10 D. Shub, 'Aaron Zundelevich', in E. H. Jeshurin, ed., *Vilne: A zamlbukh gevidmet der shtot vilne* (New York, 1935), 100, 101–2; Tscherikower, 'Der onhoyb', 471–72, and 'Yidn-revolutsiionern', 155–56. For Epshtein the term 'people' was not coterminous with the Russian peasantry, however. Vera Zasulich, who knew her well enough, made this point succinctly when she stated: 'The idea of serving the Russian people did not attract her [to the revolution]. She did not know them. For her the people were the Jewish poor' (*Vospominaniia* (Moscow, 1931), 81).
- 11 Sapir, *History*, 315–17.
- 12 B. Frumkin, 'Iz istorii revoliutsionnago dvizheniia sredi evreev 1870-kh godakh', *Evreiskaia starina*, 1 (1911): 227. My calculation of at most twenty-

- six members is based on *DBS* entries and P. Kon, 'Razgrom pervogo evreiskogo revoliutsionnogo kruzhka v Vil'ne v 1875', in *Evreiskii vestnik* (Leningrad, 1928), 150–53. For other and similar estimates, as well as biographical information, see: Iokhel'son, 'Dalekoe proshloe', 55; Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii', 39; Veynreykh, 'Neye fakten'; Shub, 'Zundelevich', 101–2; P. Kon, 'Dos tsveyte revoliutsionere krayzl in vilne 1876', *HS*, 3 (1939): 260, 279.
- 13 Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii', 37; see also B. Sapir, 'Lieberman et le socialisme Russe', *IRSH*, 3 (1939): 28.
 - 14 The assertion that the school served the poor almost exclusively may be valid for the first decade of its existence (Gessen, 'Ravvinskaia uchilishcha', *EE*, 13: 261). But even this is questionable, as has been pointed out by M. Stanislawski, who noted that the class register of the seminary in 1848 listed 102 pupils of whom 4 were from wealthy, guild families, and 25 from 'easily identifiable maskilic families... some of whom were of substantial means, though not in the merchant guilds' (*Nicholas I*, 104–6).
 - 15 Iokhel'son, 'Dalekoe proshloe', 54–55.
 - 16 *Ibid.*, 55.
 - 17 Shub, 'Zundelevich', 98.
 - 18 Litvak, *Vos geven*, 4. The term *apikoyres* (pl. *apikorsim*), from the Hebrew *apikoros*, was applied by the Orthodox and traditionalists to those whom they considered heretics in life-style and thinking, as they felt was the case with the *maskilim* and assimilationists or any person sceptical of traditional norms of behaviour.
 - 19 For Lieberman's hatred of the Rabbinate and how it influenced his early socialist *Weltanschauung*, see Sapir, 'Lieberman', 37–39.
 - 20 S. L. Tsitron, 'Aron Samuil Lieberman', in S. L. Tsitron, *Dray literarishe doyyres*, II (Vilna, 1921): 9–10.
 - 21 Documentation at the YIVO Archive shows that Lieberman graduated in 1870 (RG 24, File 151, Lieberman, A.). This contradicts Tsitron's 1868 date ('Lieberman', 12), and also puts in question M. Mishkinsky's statement that he left the Rabbinical school in 1867 ('Jewish Socialism at the Turn of the Century', *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, 3 (1973): 96). For a concise note clarifying the prevailing confusion about Lieberman's biographical data, see Haberer, 'Role', 173–74, n. 43 and 44.
 - 22 Sapir, 'Lieberman', 26; Frumkin, 'Iz istorii', 234–35.
 - 23 E. Goldhagen, 'The Ethnic Consciousness of Early Russian Jewish Socialists', *Judaism*, 23 (1974): 489–90; J. Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics* (Cambridge, 1981), 29–31.
 - 24 Cited in Frumkin, 'Iz istorii', 221.
 - 25 Iokhel'son, 'Dalekoe proshloe', 56–57.
 - 26 Frumkin, 'Iz istorii', 224, citing Zundelevich.
 - 27 Zundelevich, Letter, cited in Frumkin, 'Iz istorii', 228.
 - 28 Iokhel'son, 'Dalekoe proshloe', 57; Frumkin, 'Iz istorii', 526. See also Lieberman's letter to V. Smirnov two years later (4 April 1877, Letter 24, in [A. Lieberman], *Arn Liebmans briv*, ed., K. Marmor (New York, 1851), 141).
 - 29 Lieberman, 'Evreiskoi intelligentnoi molodezhi', *Vpered!*, 38 (1 August 1876): 475, and 'Iz Belostoka', *Vpered!*, 27 (15 February 1876): 84.

- 30 Cited in Frumkin, 'Iz istorii', 526.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Liberman to V. Smirnov, London, 27[?] May, 1880, Letter 13, in Sapir, 'Liberman', 85.
- 33 Liberman, 'Iz Belostoka', *Vpered!*, 27: 83. A good sample of Liberman's 'cosmopolitan-populist' thinking as it relates to Jews and their role in the Russian movement can be found in his article 'Iz Vil'no', *Vpered!*, 16 (1 September 1875): 505.
- 34 The contrasting of Liberman's supposed 'nationalism' with their own socialist form of assimilationism has been uncritically accepted in much of the literature on Liberman. Particularly guilty of juxtaposing Liberman's 'nationalist socialism' with the assimilationist cosmopolitanism of his Jewish comrades are L. Deich ('Der ershter yidish sotsialistisher propagandist', *Di tsukunft*, 21 (1916): 677–83); S. Agurski ('Der kharakter fun der sotsialistisher bavegung tsvishn di yidishe arbeyter biz onshteyung fun der R.S.D.A.P.', *Tsaytshrift*, 4 (Minsk, 1930): 238–42); and, though to a lesser degree, Tscherikower ('Der onhoyb', 507–30). A welcome corrective to their one-sided interpretation can be found in Frumkin ('Iz istorii', 533–34) and in Morris Vinchevski's article: 'Mit a dur tsurik. Zundeleovich un Liberman', *Di tsukunft* (December 1894): 1–6. But Vinchevski tends to go to the other extreme by refusing to address the conflict between Liberman and Zundeleovich. Characterizing Liberman as 'a true talmudist' and Zundeleovich as 'a true Jew', he does not recognize any difference in the Jewishness of their socialism, and exaggerates by calling the latter the 'spiritual father' of Jewish socialism.
- 35 For a short but excellent exposition of the historical significance but ultimate failure of Liberman as a Jewish socialist 'still-born', see Frankel, *Prophecy*, 28–48.
- 36 On the destruction of the circle and the publicity surrounding it, see: Kon, 'Razgrom', 144–52, Liberman, 'Iz Vil'no', *Vpered!*, 16: 505–6; Frumkin, 'Iz istorii', 229–30; and YIVO Archive documents (RG 24, File 181, sheet 4–5, 6 and 7a).
- 37 See Liberman's coverage of these events in 'Iz Vil'no', *Vpered!*, 21 (15 November 1875): 660–63, and 'Kosvennyi produkt pravitel'svennoi paniki', *Vpered!*, 18 (October 1875): 563–65.
- 38 Frumkin, 'Iz istorii', 232.
- 39 Kon, 'Tsveyte revolutsionere krayzl', 274–75, 279 (Oral memoirs of Iosel Trivosh and 'Ad-es'). Meer-Sidor appears to have had an older sister, Sonia, who was also active in the Vilna movement from its beginnings. For this she was arrested together with Finkelshtein in 1872 (see comments by K. Marmor, in Vinchevski, *Gezamelte verk*, X:2, 222n).
- 40 [A. Liberman], 'Ob organizatsii sotsial'no-revoliutsionnogo soiuzo mezhdu evreiami v Rossii', in Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii', 47, 48. For Liberman's relationship with Lavrov and Smirnov, and their objections to his Hebrew bias and excessive preoccupation with 'the Bible and the rabbis', see Sapir, 'Liberman', 30–32, 49, 52–54, and Smirnov's letter to R. Idel'son, Nov. 25, 1875, Letter no. 2 (ibid., 59–61).
- 41 [Liberman], 'Ob organizatsii', 47–48. On the second circle's literary activity,

- see: 'Doklad III ekspeditsii III otd., S. E. V. Kants. po obvineniiu 38 zHITElei severo-zapadnogo kraia v prestupnoi propagande', in Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii', 42, 53–54. Kon, 'Tsveyte revolutsionere krayzl', 259, 266–67; S. L. Tsitron, 'I. L. Davidovich', in *Dray literarishe doyres*, II (Vilna, 1921), 142–43.
- 42 'Doklad', 51–52. According to Trivosh, the 'main activists' of the second circle were Vanel and Barel (Kon, 'Tsveyte revolutsionere krayzl', 273, 274). Trivosh's statement is confirmed by Davidovich's own account (see Tsitron, 'Davidovich', 139).
- 43 Kon, 'Tsveyte revolutsionere krayzl', 260; Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii', 42.
- 44 Kon, 'Tsveyte revolutsionere krayzl', 257–64; 'Doklad', 52.
- 45 'Doklad', 52–54. See also Kon, 'Tsveyte revolutsionere krayzl', 264–68.
- 46 Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii', 42; 'Doklad', 54, 57.
- 47 Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii', 41; Kon, 'Tsveyte revolutsionere krayzl', 261–64, 269–70, 275–76 (memoirs of Trivosh).
- 48 Apparently there were five non-Jewish activists: M. Ianchevskii, Dmitrii Beliaev, E. Zeidler, Konstantin and Stanislav Bel'skii. For a detailed account of the membership of the second Vilna circle, and pertinent biographical data, see Haberer, 'Role', 198–208.
- 49 Kon, 'Tsveyte revolutsionere krayzl', 270; 'Doklad', 56.
- 50 [M. Iakovlev], 'Zakliuchenie iuriskonsul'ta III otd. po delu o 38 litsakh', in Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii', 58.
- 51 Frankel, 'Socialism and Jewish Nationalism', 46–47.
- 52 [Iakovlev], 'Zakliuchenie', 58–59.
- 53 N. I. Sidorov, 'Statisticheskie svedeniia o propagandistakh 70-kh godov v obrabotke III otdeleniia', *KS*, 38 (1928): 43, 40, 38. For a breakdown of Merkulov's statistical data see Appendix, Table 1.
- 54 I. A. Hourwich [Gurvich], 'Zikhroyes fun an apikuros', *Freye arbeyter shtime*, New York, 27 January 1922 (no. 1144), 3.
- 55 How much the Bund owed to this tradition, and the degree to which it actually evolved out of the preceding Populist circles, has been shown by A. Menes, 'Di yidishe arbeter-bavegung in rusland fun onhoyb 70er bizn suf 90er yorn', *HS*, 3 (1939), 25–32; J. Peskin, 'Di "grupe yidishe sotsial-demokratn in rusland" un Arkadi Kremer', *HS*, 3, 544–46; F. Kurski, 'Der onhoyb. Etlekhe bamerkungen tsu a groyser teme', *Folkstsaytung*, 356 (Warsaw), 16 December 1932, 9.

5 SOCIALIST JEWS AND RUSSIAN POPULISM

- 1 This estimate is based on the 1877 police report of M. M. Merkulov which indicates that out of 1,054 'political criminals' prosecuted judicially and administratively 68 or 6.5 per cent were Jews (N. I. Sidorov, 'Statisticheskie svedeniia', 27–56). For a detailed breakdown of data found in this report, see Appendix, Table 1.
- 2 In calculating the ages of Jewish revolutionaries upon entering the movement, the Israeli historian Boris Orlov identified the years 1871–72 and 1874–76 as periods of sharp increase in the number of Jewish activists with 41 and 196

- newcomers respectively ('A Statistical Analysis of Jewish Participation in the Russian Revolutionary Movement of the 1870s', *Slavic and Soviet Series*, 4 (Tel Aviv, 1979): 9–11).
- 3 According to the 1897 census, Jews comprised 4.13 per cent of Russia's population (A. Nossig, ed., *Juedische Statistik* (Berlin, 1903), 261).
 - 4 This assessment differs slightly from that of N. A. Troitskii, who listed 17 Jews among a total membership of 101 persons (*Bol'shoe obshchestvo*, 82–84). My own calculation includes 5 more members, all of whom were Jews: D. M. Gertsenshtein (St Petersburg), M. Grinshtein and Z. K. Lvova (Moscow), S. G. Rubinshtein (Odessa), and D. Shvartsman (Kiev).
 - 5 L. Deich, *Rol'*, 54, 59–60; M. Aldanov, 'Russian Jews of the 1870s and 1880s', in J. Frumkin, G. Aronson, and A. Goldenweiser, eds., *Russian Jewry* (New York, 1966), 11. Deich set the historiographical trend among Jewish historians of interpreting the role of Jews as primarily technical (cf. Greenberg, *Jews in Russia*, I, 149; and Schapiro, 'Role', 152–53).
 - 6 Deich, *Rol'*, 74.
 - 7 Schapiro, 'The Role of the Jews', 153, 155–56.
 - 8 Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 131–35.
 - 9 Deich, *Rol'*, 52–53.
 - 10 Ibid., 55–59.
 - 11 Ibid., 56.
 - 12 On regional distribution of Jewish activists in Russia in the 1870s, see Orlov, 'A Statistical Analysis', 11–12. Although St Petersburg contained more Jewish activists than any other city, the combined number of Jews from cities in the Pale was much larger. Moreover, in 1873–74, there were not as many Jewish students, and therefore radicals, in St Petersburg as in the second half of the 1870s, which tends to inflate Orlov's findings calculated for the whole of this decade.
 - 13 On this, see especially Iokhelson's memoirs in which he describes his desire 'to go to the people' without having had the opportunity to do so ('Dalekoe proshloe', 53–75).
 - 14 For bio-bibliographical information on these and other Jewish *narodniki*, see Haberer, 'Role', 226, nos. 14–16.
 - 15 Even a cursory count of Jewish participants in circles active in the *v narod* movement yields a figure of close to 50 people, of whom at least 30 were actively involved with the peasants. The remainder were people who maintained communications, organized transports of literature, and managed transit quarters and/or hiding places for *narodniki* on their way to and from the villages. In-depth research into Jewish participation in the *v narod* movement, 1873–75/6, would probably add many more individuals to the approximately 50 mentioned here. For the startling recurrence of Jewish names linked to the movement by government investigators, see Bazilevskii *Gosudarstvennyiia prestupleniia*, 11–267.
 - 16 This sketch, as well as subsequent biographical information, derives from Aptekman's autobiography in *Granat*, 40 (1927): 1–12, his biography in *DBS*, II-1: 46–49, and his letter to L. Deich (21 May 1913) in *Rol'*, 278–82.
 - 17 *Granat*, 40: 5. The circle in question centred around E. N. Kovalskaia (nee Solitseva). For a detailed description of its activity and membership, which

- also included Lazar Goldenberg and was frequented by Veniamin Portugalov, see Aptekman's memoirs, *Obshchestvo*, 44–59.
- 18 *Granat*, 40: 7; Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 141.
 - 19 Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 142.
 - 20 Venturi, *Roots of Revolution*, 503; G. P. Fedotov, 'The Religious Source of Russian Populism', *The Russian Review*, 1 (April 1942): 27–39.
 - 21 See especially his letter to Deich, 21 May 1913, in *Rol'*, 278–79.
 - 22 *Ibid.*, 281–82.
 - 23 Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 162–67.
 - 24 Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 132.
 - 25 Deich, *Rol'*, 283–84. For Aptekman's unique mix of 'medical-evangelical' propaganda, see *Obshchestvo*, 168–77.
 - 26 L. G. Deich, *Za polveka*, I:1 (Moscow, 1922), 10. On his childhood and upbringing see pages 5–42, as well as his autobiography in *Granat*, 40 (1927): 105–19.
 - 27 Deich, *Za polveka* (Moscow, 1922), 18.
 - 28 *Granat*, 40: 106.
 - 29 Deich, *Za polveka* (Moscow, 1922), 19–24. Prior to joining Akselrod's Kiev circle, Semen Lure was also a participant in this venture (Levental', 'Semen Lur'e', 126–27).
 - 30 Deich, *Za polveka* (Moscow, 1922), 33.
 - 31 *Ibid.*, 33–37; *Granat*, 40: 106–7. It was at this point, in the fall of 1874, that he wanted to join Akselrod's circle, only to discover that its members had been forced to emigrate.
 - 32 Deich, *Za polveka*, (Moscow, 1922), 106–7, 109.
 - 33 *Ibid.*, 107–8, 117–18.
 - 34 Ulam, *Name of the People*, 232.
 - 35 Deich, *Rol'*, 57–59.
 - 36 R. J. Brym, *The Jewish Intelligentsia and Russian Marxism* (London, 1978), 122, n. 10; Deich, *Rol'*, 54; P. Aksel'rod, letter to Deich, Summer 1913, Archive 'Dom Plekhanova', Fond no. 1097, AD.Z/37.30. Cf., Sapir, *History*, 237, 230–31.
 - 37 Deich, *Rol'*, 54–55; Aksel'rod, letter to Deich, Summer 1913, 'Dom Plekhanova'.
 - 38 Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 126–27. Boris Sapir, in citing Akselrod's criticism, refers to Deich's claim as a 'sweeping statement' ('Jewish Socialists around Vpered', *IRSH*, 10 (1965): 366).
 - 39 Deich, *Za polveka* (Berlin, 1923), I, 37–44, 302–6, and II, 41–43, 37–39; and 'D. A. Klements', Manuscript, Archive 'Dom Plekhanova', AD.11.6., 63. For a detailed discussion where Natanson stood ideologically in 1875–76 and the creation of the Northern Populist Organization in the same period, see chapter 6.
 - 40 Sapir, *History*, 265. This was the contemporary Lavrovists' perception of the 'Chaikovtsy' of the mid-1870s whom they considered 'moderate Bakuninists' as opposed to the buntarist following of Bakunin and actual members of Bakuninist circles in Russia.
 - 41 Sapir, *History*, 271–76. For more on Ginzburg, see chapter 6.
 - 42 Deich, *Rol'*, 121–30.

- 43 For a detailed analysis of the varying degrees of Jewish radicalism due to regional differences in the 'revolutionary socialization' of Jews in Vilna, Mogilev-Kiev, and St Petersburg–Moscow–Odessa, see Haberer, 'Role', 259–68.
- 44 On Tkachev and his Jacobin brand of Populism, see D. Hardy, *Petr Tkachev, the Critic as a Jacobin* (Seattle, 1977).
- 45 Deich, *Rol'*, 36–38. Another factor listed by Deich to account for Jewish moderation was, as he wrote, that Jews abhorred violence because 'neither by our nature nor by our upbringing were we qualified to shed human blood' ('Unshuldig gehangene', *Di tsukunft*, 21 (February 1916): 159–60). The same argument has been put forth by M. Aldanov ('Russian Jews of the 1870s and 1880s', in Frumkin, *Russian Jewry (1860–1917)*, 14–16). This viewpoint has been justly criticized by L. Schapiro ('Role', 152). For Deich's general argument of the Jewish nihilist inclination towards 'peaceful activity' and its extension into the Populist decades of the 1870s and 1880s, see *Rol'*, 34–47, 51–69.
- 46 Frankel, 'Socialism and Jewish Nationalism', 43–44, 54.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 38.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 43–44.
- 49 Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 131.
- 50 A. O. Lukashevich, 'V narod!', *Byloe*, 15 (1907): 5; see also N. S. Rusanov, *Biografiia Petra Lavrovicha* (1899), 23–24. Both are cited pertinently by J. Scanlan, 'Peter Lavrov. An Intellectual Biography', in Lavrov, *Historical Letters*, 49–50.
- 51 Pomper, *Revolutionary Intelligentsia*, 107.
- 52 Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 132; Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 91.
- 53 Cf., Frankel, 'Socialism and Jewish Nationalism', 59.

6 JEWISH 'GENERALS OF REVOLUTION'

- 1 Deich, *Za polveka* (Berlin, 1923), I, 39–40.
- 2 This applies specifically to the works of Ulam (*Name of the People*), P. S. Tkachenko (*Revoliutsionnaia narodniceskaia organizatsiia 'Zemlia i Volia' 1876–1879* (Moscow, 1961)), and Venturi (*Roots of Revolution*).
- 3 Venturi, *Roots*, 558 (wording adjusted).
- 4 Ulam, *Name of the People*, 245. Deich was the first to use this expression in his review of Aptekman's *Obshchestvo 'Zemlia i Volia'*, *KS*, 10 (1924): 285.
- 5 Deich, *Rol'*, 263. That Natanson returned only in 1876, as stated in *DBS* (II-3: 1003–4), is incorrect. On this, as well as other chronological data, see Haberer, 'Role', 290, n. 15.
- 6 Initially this circle was known merely as a group of people, mainly former Chaikovtsy, headed by Natanson. Only later on, in the spring of 1876, did it come to be known as either the circle of Natanson or the Society of Troglodytes and henceforth its members were interchangeably called Natansonovtsy or Troglodytes. Until that time they generally continued to be called 'Chaikovtsy' even though their circle had ceased to exist in the fall of 1874 (Troitskii, *Bol'shoe obshchestvo*, 76; see also Haberer, 'Role', 293, n. 19).

- 7 Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoi*, 53–54.
- 8 Letter of P. B. Aksel'rod to L. G. Deich, Summer 1913, Archive Dom Plekhanova, Fond no. 1097, A. D. 2/37.30. In this letter Akselrod writes: 'That the father of the society of "Zemlia i Volia" was precisely Natanson, that he appeared as the gatherer of the revolutionary Russian lands after the destruction of 1874, that I remember perfectly, because in that fall-winter of 1875 [I] was an illegal in St Petersburg [and] saw myself how the remnants of the scattered army grouped themselves around him ...'.
- 9 Sapir, *History*, 390 n. 130.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 271.
- 11 Sapir, 'Jewish Socialists', 373–75.
- 12 I. Iasinskii, *Roman moei zhizni* (Moscow–Leningrad, 1926), 66, 75.
- 13 N. G. Kuliabko-Koretskii, *Iz dal'nikh let. Vospominaniia lavrista* (Moscow, 1931), 120.
- 14 Sapir, *History*, 247–50, 334–35.
- 15 'Tsirkuliar o soedinenii kruzhkov', in B. Sapir, ed. *Dokumenty*, vol. II of 'Vpered!' 1873–1877 (Dordrecht, 1970), ed. by Sapir 179–81 (no. 56).
- 16 Sapir, *Dokumenty*, 186, 187, 193 (letters, nos. 57 and 58).
- 17 *Ibid.*, 192 (letter, no. 58). For Natanson as the chief organizer of the Union, see also Sapir, 'Liberman', 31 and 62, n. 1, and *History*, 337.
- 18 Sapir, *Dokumenty*, 373 (no. 168), and 293 (no. 119).
- 19 *Ibid.*, 192 (no. 58).
- 20 [A. D. Mikhailov], *Pis'ma narodovol'tsa A. D. Mikhailova* (Moscow, 1933), 231.
- 21 For the Zundelevich–Zalman connection, see: Iokhel'son, 'Dalekoe proshloe', 58–59, 63–64, and *Pervye dni Narodnoi Voli* (Petersburg, 1922), 31–43, 47, 54. For a fictional, but historically accurate, account, see Sergei Kravchinskii's (Stepniak) novel, *The Career of a Nihilist* (London, 1890), 26–36 (here the characters David Stirn and Samuel Susser are patterned on the real-life persons Zundelevich and Zalman).
- 22 Its 'postmaster' seems to have been Meer-Sidor Barel, who enjoyed a certain degree of 'immunity' from the police due to his wealthy family's good relations with the local authorities (see: Kon, 'Nayes', 26–27; memoirs of Trivosh and Ad-es, in Kon, 'Tsveyte revoliutsionere krayzl', 274 and 279).
- 23 Stepniak, *Career of a Nihilist*, 26; Sapir, *History*, 315, and 'Jewish Socialists', 371–72.
- 24 G. E. Gurevich, 'Protsses evreiskikh sotsialistov v Berline', *Evreiskaia starina*, 10 (1918): 152, 158.
- 25 Iokhel'son, 'Dalekoe proshloe', 62; Gurevich, 'Zikhroynes', 233–34. For a detailed account of the relationship between Jewish socialists and the leaders of German Social Democracy, see Jack Jacobs, 'Karl Kautsky and the Jewish Question' (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1982). They were termed 'Jewish nihilists' in the German press due to the trial of Gurevich, Liberman, and Moisei Aronson in Berlin in 1878–79 (see: Gurevich, 'Protsses', and 'Pervyi protsess "nigilistov" v Berline', *Byloe*, 9/21 (September 1907): 77–82; B. Weinryb, *In the Beginning of Jewish Socialism* (Jerusalem, 1940), 55–72 (in German and Hebrew)).
- 26 Gurevich, 'Zikhroynes', 235–36.

- 27 P. L. Lavrov, *Narodniki-propagandisty, 1873–1878 godov* (St Petersburg, 1907), 283.
- 28 Sapir, *Dokumenty*, 193 (letter, no. 58).
- 29 Ibid., 187 (letter, no. 57). See also Sapir, *History*, 341–43.
- 30 Sapir, *Dokumenty*, 197 (letter, no. 58). Sapir, ‘Jewish Socialists’, 379. In his biographical sketch of Idelson (ibid., 377–79) Sapir writes: ‘The third in the triumvirate, without whom Lavrov would hardly have been able to manage *Vpered!*, was a young woman, Rozaliia Khristoforovna Idelson, the first two being Smirnov and Ginzburg’. For her role in originating *Vpered!* and working on its behalf, see also: Sapir, *History*, 248–50, 264–65, 310–11; Kuliabko-Koretskii, *Iz davnikh let*, 15–16, 219.
- 31 Sapir, *Dokumenty*, 197 (letter, no. 58).
- 32 Ibid., 194 (letter, no. 58).
- 33 Sapir, *History*, 233.
- 34 Sapir, *Dokumenty*, 192 (letter, no. 58).
- 35 See their personal correspondence with the editors of *Vpered!* (ibid., nos. 130 and 134); and their formal declaration of secession: ‘Zapiska, predstavleniia lavristami obshchemu sobraniiu “Soiuza russkikh revoliutsionnykh grupp”’, (ibid., 204–10, no. 61).
- 36 Apparently, the Natansonovtsy already then discussed the publication of a ‘party organ’ by the name of ‘Zemlia i Volia’ (M. R. Popov, *Zapiski zemlevol'tsa* (Moscow, 1933), 151–52).
- 37 On this whole affair of separation, see Sapir, *History*, 343–47. An unfortunate casualty of this break-up was the planned publication of a Yiddish socialist paper as a supplement to *Vpered!*, which had been agreed upon by Natanson and Smirnov, with details being worked out by Zundeleovich, Goldenberg, and Liberman (see Sapir, ‘Liberman’, 46–47, 59–62; and Haberer, ‘Role’, 319–21). The project was revived later on by Liberman and members of the Berlin circle, who published their own journal, *Ha-emeth*, in 1877.
- 38 Sapir, *History*, 343–63. Though personal animosity on the part of Lavrov against Ginzburg was also an important factor in this development (271–73, 288–89, 321–22, 324–29, 357).
- 39 Sapir, ‘Jewish Socialists’, 376.
- 40 Venturi, *Roots*, 93–94; Levin, *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie*, 379–82; G. V. Plekhanov, ‘Russkii rabochii v revoliutsionnom dvizhenii’, and ‘Predislovie k russkom izdaniiu knigi A. Tuna’, in Plekhanov, *Sochineniia*, 3 (1925): 140–41 and 24 (1927): 86–91.
- 41 Sapir, *History*, 274, 361–62.
- 42 Ibid., 362–63.
- 43 [A. D. Mikhailov], ‘Aleksandr Dmitrievich Mikhailov (materialy dlia biografii)’, *Byloe*, 2 (1906): 162–63.
- 44 N. Morozov, *Povesti moei zhizni*, 2 vols. (Moscow, 1962), II, 252; Figner, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, I, 113. See also Venturi, *Roots*, 567, 808, n. 14.
- 45 Cf. Deich, *Rol'*, 261–62, and ‘Poluvekovye godovshchiny’, *Gruppa*, 4 (1926): 79–80.
- 46 For example, the Southern Buntarists were out of luck when they approached Lizogub for financial assistance (Deich, *Za polveka*, 2 (Berlin, 1923): 293; M. F. Frolenko, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 2 vols. (Moscow, 1930–31), I: 206).

- Unfortunately with Lizogub's arrest in 1878, this resource dried up. Zundeleovich, who was in charge of securing the Lizogub inheritance, was able to realize only 10,000 rubles. The rest was confiscated by the government (Deich, 'Valer'ian Osinskii', *KS*, 54 (1929): 12, n. 2; and [V. V. Drigo], 'K biografii D. A. Lizoguba', *KS*, 53: 93–103). For Lizogub's early 'Unionist-Natansonovtsy' association, see Deich, review of Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 286, and *Rol'*, 262–62; and V. N. Figner 'Mark Andreevich Natanson', *KS*, 56 (1929): 143.
- 47 Frolenko, *Sobranie sochinenii*, II: 207, 197. For the enormous attraction Natanson's organization held for the revolutionary youth because of its 'power and wealth', see R. M. Plekhanova, 'Periferiinyi kruzhok "Zemli i Voli"', *Gruppa*, 4 (1926): 87.
 - 48 S. N. Valk, ed., *Arkhiv 'Zemli i Voli' i Narodnoi Voli'* (Moscow, 1930), 54–57. See also G. M. Lifshits and K. G. Liashenko 'Kak sozdavalas' programma vtoroi "Zemli i Voli"', *Voprosy istorii*, 9 (1965): 49–50.
 - 49 Valk, *Arkhiv*, 57; [V. Figner], 'Iz avtobiografii Very Figner', *Byloe*, 2 (1917): 174–75.
 - 50 Valk, *Arkhiv*, 57.
 - 51 For a comparative content analysis of programmatic 'Unionist' statements, the 'Zemlia i Volia' programme, and the Lavrovists' official declaration of withdrawal from the Union ('Zapiska'), demonstrating this continuity in greater detail, see Haberer, 'Role', 312–15, 322, 342–46.
 - 52 Though a careful reading of memoir literature shows recognition of the fact that Natanson initiated this pragmatic shift in Populism, which has been equated with its classical notion of *narodnichestvo* (see V. Chernov, *Yidishe tuer in der partay sotsialistn revolutsiionern* (New York 1948), 35–36; and Tikhomirov, *Vospominaniia*, 85–86).
 - 53 This was clearly stated by V. Figner in an editorial note to O. Aptekman's autobiography in *Granat*, 40: 9. See also her memoirs, *Nacht über Russland* (Berlin, 1928), 73–74.
 - 54 Figner, 'Natanson', 144.
 - 55 [Figner], 'Iz avtobiografii', 176.
 - 56 Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 204.
 - 57 *Ibid.*, 204.
 - 58 Baum, 'Programma', 98–99; see also the detailed regulatory statute on 99–106, and on 97 where he makes a strong plea for 'de-personalizing' relationships of organizational nature.
 - 59 Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 200.
 - 60 For a good treatment of the Chigirin affair and extensive translations from original sources, as well as its specific Ukrainian aspects, see D. Field, *Rebels in the Name of the Tsar* (Boston, 1976), 113–207.
 - 61 On Anna Rozenshtein's role see: Venturi, *Roots*, 584; and Deich, *Za polveka*, 2 (Berlin, 1923): 55, 74–75. For an English translation of the 'Charter', see Field, *Rebels*, 172–180.
 - 62 Deich, 'Osinskii', 11.
 - 63 *Ibid.*, 11–12; and Deich, *Rol'*, 263.
 - 64 Deich, 'Osinskii', 11.
 - 65 *Ibid.*, 13. See as well, his book *Rol'*, 263, and his article in 'Oproverzhenie ili

- otstuplenie', *Iskra*, 29 (1 December 1902): 3. The fact that the Chigirintsy received 2000 rubles from the leader of Zemlia i Volia, Mark Natanson (that is, his 'Lizogub treasury'), definitely settles the question which Daniel Field poses when, in discussing the Chigirin affair and the money paid out by Stefanovich to the *druzhinniki*, he asks: 'Where did he get the money? We would like to know' (Field, *Rebels*, 155 and 203, n. 29 – note 29 has mistakenly been numbered 27 in the text on 155). For a critical note on Field's discussion of this issue, see Haberer, 'Role', 362, n. 154.
- 66 Sapir, *Dokumenty*, 304 (letter, no. 130). The most serious blunder Natanson committed in his long revolutionary career – and the true nemesis of his party-political activism – was his alliance with the Bolsheviks in 1917–18.
- 67 Venturi, *Roots*, 584. For a lucid discussion of the revolutionaries' attitude toward the Chigirin affair and the issues it raised in terms of revolutionary ethics, see Field, *Rebels*, 163–72, and Levin, *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie*, 390–91. For my own comments on the general acceptance (and insincere disclaimers) of the venture in revolutionary circles, see 'Role', 362–64.
- 68 The name of the 'Society of Friends' was probably an invention of the authorities who were unaware that this circle was linked to Zemlia i Volia (E. A. Korol'chuk, 'Iz istorii propagandy sredi rabochikh Peterburga vo vtoroi polovine 70-kh godov', in *IRS*, 3 (1926): 50.
- 69 Figner, *Nacht über Russland*, 74–76; Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 188–91, 201.
- 70 Plekhanov, 'Russkii rabochii', 155. The explicitly political intent of this agitation was made clear in a lengthy manuscript, 'Concerning the Assemblage of the Russian People's Party of December 6, 1876' ('Rukopis' *IRS*, 3 (1926) 107–17), which, in my opinion was sponsored by Natanson and written by his close associate Aleksei Oboleshev. That this was a typical Natansonist statement in its comprehensive justification of the Kazan demonstration as a means of politicizing 'the people', especially workers, has so far not been recognized by commentators of the document (see: D. Kuz'min [Kolosov], 'Kazanskaia demonstratsiia 1876 i Plekhanov', *KS*, 42 [1928]: 7–40; Korol'chuk, 'Iz istorii propagandy', 49–63; and P. S. McKinsey's interpretative article, 'The Kazan Square Demonstration and the Conflict Between Russian Workers and Intelligenty', *SR*, 44 (1985): 83–103 – and my critique of their interpretations of 'Concerning the Assemblage' and its authorship in 'Role', 366–68, nos. 159 and 161).
- 71 N. A. Troitskii, *Tsarskie sudy protiv revoliutsionnoi Rossii. Politicheskie protsessy 1871–1880 gg.* (Saratov, 1976), 349–50. On Sheftel, Novakovskii, and Bibergal (as well as his wife, also a Jewish activist), see: Deich, *Rol'*, 153–91, and *Za polveka*, 2 (Berlin, 1923): 72–73, 301–6; M. M. Cherniavskii, 'Aleksandr Nikolaevich Bibergal', *KS*, 22 (1926): 213–17; A. N. Bibergal', 'Vospominaniia o demonstratsii na Kazanskoi ploschadi', *KS*, 28–29 (1926): 21–25. The Decembrist analogy belongs to A. D. Mikhailov (Pribyleva-Korba, *Narodovolets Mikhailov*, 151).
- 72 M. M. Chernavskii, 'Demonstratsiia 6 dekabria 1876 goda', *KS*, 28–29 (1926): 7; 'Zakliuchenie prokurora Peterburg sudebnoi palaty, Fuksa, po delu "Obshchestva družhei", ot 10 dekabria 1877', in *IRS*, 3 (1926): 87–95. Based on workers' testimonies (often cited verbatim), 'Zakliuchenie' (the government's judicial report) details Natanson's activity and consistently

identifies him as the *principal* exponent of ‘political agitation’, exhorting the workers to engage in activities of ‘political character’. The role of Natanson has been confirmed by Plekhanov who told Akselrod that ‘the principal organizer of the Kazan demonstration was precisely Natanson ...’. (Aksel’rod to L. G. Deich, Letter, Summer 1913, *Dom Plekhanova*, Fond no. 1097, AD. 2/37.30). On Natanson’s sentencing and exile, see *DBS*, II-3: 1004–5.

- 73 Figner, ‘Natanson’, 145–46.
- 74 [Mikhailov], *Pis’ma*, 228.
- 75 Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 205.
- 76 Figner, ‘Natanson’, 149–50.
- 77 Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 199–200, 251–55; Popov, ‘Iz moego revoliutsionnago proshlago’, 276–78; Deich, *Rol’*, 300–5.
- 78 Stepniak, *Podpol’naia Rossiia*, 127–28.
- 79 S. Livshits, ‘Podpol’nye tipografii’, *KS*, 43 (1928): 72–78; Stepniak, *Podpol’naia Rossiia*, 128–29; Iokhel’son, ‘Dalekoe proshloe’, 59; Zundeleovich, letter to B. Nikolaevskii, 14 February 1923 (*Perepiska G. V. Plekhanova i P. B. Aksel’roda* (Moscow, 1925), 211–13).
- 80 [Mikhailov], *Pis’ma*, 231–32.
- 81 Lavrov, *Narodniki-propagandisty*, 287.
- 82 *Ibid.*, 288.

7 THE HERESY OF POLITICAL TERRORISM

- 1 Sapir, *History*, 395, n. 150.
- 2 Sapir, ‘Jewish Socialists’, 372.
- 3 [Mikhailov], *Pis’ma*, 132–33.
- 4 L. G. Deich, ‘Aaron Zundeleovich (odin iz pervykh sotsial-demokratov Rossii)’, *Gruppa*, 2 (1924): 192–94; see also his much shorter obituary article: ‘Smert’ Aarona Zundeleovicha’, *KS*, 8 (1924): 214–15, and Mikhailov’s endearing reference to Zundeleovich as our ‘most beloved’ and ‘dearest Moisha’ (*Pis’ma*, 233).
- 5 Zakliuchenie prokurora’, 88–95. On Sharashkin, see *DBS*, II-4: 1994; and Figner, *Nacht über Russland*, 78–79.
- 6 ‘Svod pokazanii dannykh nekotorymi iz arestovannykh po delom v gosudarstvennykh prestupleniakh’, *Byloe*, 7 (1907): 144; A. Thun, *Geschichte der revolutionären Bewegung in Russland* (Leipzig, 1883), 155; Deich, *Za polveka*, 2 (Berlin, 1923): 120–34). For additional literature and critical comments on the historiography of the Gorinovich affair, see Haberer, ‘Role’, 386, n. 15.
- 7 Deich tells the story of his arrest, extradition, and trial in *Sixteen Years in Siberia* (London, 1903; reprinted by Hyperion Press, CT in 1977, 1–104). There is a short biographical sketch of Lev Maidanskii and his parents by Deich in *Di tsukunft*, 21: 2 (1916): 158–60, which was later published in Russian as ‘Nevinno poveshennye’ (*Evreiskaia letopis’*, 4: 134–36).
- 8 Venturi, *Roots*, 581.
- 9 Ulam, *In the Name of the People*, 274. See also: S. S. Volk, *Narodnaia Volia, 1879–1882* (Moscow–Leningrad, 1966), 65–74; L. Deich, ‘Ocherki po istorii russkogo revoliutsionnogo dvizheniia. Semidesiatniki. 1860–1870-e gg.’

- (typed manuscript, 1919–1921, Dom Plekhanova, Fond AD. 12.1.), 6–8; V. I. Nevskii, *Ot ‘Zemlia i volia’ k gruppe ‘Osvobozhdenie truda’* (Moscow, 1930), 219) – and my own critical comments in ‘Role’, 389, n. 20.
- 10 A. Kappeler, ‘Zur Charakteristik russischer Terroristen (1878–1887)’, *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 27: 4 (1979): 532.
 - 11 Both Kraev and Maidanskii were members of the Elizavetgrad circle which had been organized in 1875 by Rozenfeld, and S. S. and L. S. Zlatopolskii in order to provide ‘material and moral support to people spreading social-revolutionary teaching’. On its activity and membership, and related circles in Nicholaev, see Deich, *Za polveka* (Berlin, 1923), 2: 70–73, 174–76, 228–32.
 - 12 S. E. Lion, ‘Pervaia vooruzhennaia demonstratsiia (Po lichnym vospominaniiam i arkhivnym materialam)’, *KS*, 45–46 (1928), 64–69; A. Semenov, ‘Solomon Vittenberg. (Materialy k biografii)’, *Byloe*, 6: 34 (1925): 64. For a characterization of the Lion circle, which included Orzhikh, Anastasia Shekhter and perhaps her sister Sofia, see: S. E. Lion, ‘Ot propagandy k terroru’, *KS*, 12 (1924): 14–20; and A. N. Shekhter, ‘Revoliutsionnaia Odessa 1877–1878 gg. (K kharakteristike Lione i Fomicheva)’, *KS*, 6 (1923): 44–52. Moreinis and Grinberg belonged to Kovalskii’s group (F. A. Moreinis, *Granat*, 40: 295–96).
 - 13 Lion, ‘Ot propagandy’, *KS*, 13 (1924): 19. That Vittenberg fired the first shots at the soldiers who were trying to break up the unruly crowds has been shown by Khristina Grinberg (‘K protsessu I. M. Koval’skogo’, *Byloe*, 10 (October 1906): 161). See also, Semenov, ‘Vittenberg’, 64–65; and M. A. Moreinis, ‘Solomon Iakovlevich Vittenberg i protsess 28-mi’, *KS*, 56 (1929): 52.
 - 14 Moreinis, ‘Vittenberg’, 49. See also Moreinis’ autobiography, *Granat*, 40: 280.
 - 15 That Vittenberg was arrested in connection with the Gorinovich affair has been categorically denied by Moreinis who writes that the reasons for his arrest and imprisonment have remained unknown (‘Vittenberg’, 51).
 - 16 For the role of Osinskii and Kovalskii in promoting the emergence of political terrorism, and the links between them and Vittenberg, see Deich, ‘Di ershte yiden-teroristen’, *Di tsukunft*, 20 (1915): 1122; and Volk, *Narodnaia Volia*, 67–70.
 - 17 Moreinis, ‘Vittenberg’, 55–56.
 - 18 Ibid., 56. All three, including Moreinis, have been entered in *DBS*, II. There is also a short biographical note on A. G. Lurii with a portrait in *KS*, 15 (1925): 255. For Mikhail Moreinis see also, his own and his sister’s (F. Moreinis-Muratova) autobiography in *Granat*, 40: 279–90 and 290–305. For other associates of the circle, see Haberer, ‘Role’, 401, n. 44.
 - 19 Moreinis, ‘Vittenberg’, 56, and *Granat*, 40: 282. For the Vittenberg-Logovenko link and their activity among the sailors of the Russian Black Sea fleet see A. Drezen, ‘Matrosy v revoliutsionnom dvizhenii 70-kh godov’, *KS*, 31 (1927): 60–80.
 - 20 Moreinis and Moreinis-Muratova, *Granat*, 40: 282–83 and 296–97. For the sentences handed down and the hangings, see: Moreinis, ‘Vittenberg’, 59–67, and Troitskii, *Tsarskie sudy*, 234–35, 237–39, 385–87.
 - 21 ‘Pis’mo Vittenberga k tovarishcham’, in *Literatura partii ‘Narodnoi Voli’*

- (1905), 11–12. The letter was fittingly published in the first issue of *Narodnaia Volia* (1 October 1879) and, like Vittenberg's execution, tremendously impressed the revolutionary community (Volk, *Narodnaia Volia*, 94–95).
- 22 Moreinis-Muratova, *Granat*, 40: 296.
- 23 In the end this 'higher unity' was symbolized by Vittenberg's refusal to consider Orthodox baptism to divert his fate, and his refusal to see the rabbi to offer him consolation. He preferred to die as a secular Jew and found consolation in his mother's last words – 'die as what you are' (Moreinis, 'Vittenberg', 64–66). As Elias Tscherikower said: 'At that moment the two worlds, which had been divided by the revolution, were unified: the world of the pious, simple mother and the world of her son, the revolutionary' ('Yidn-revolutsionern', 140).
- 24 Besides various pseudonyms (e.g., Arsenii and Anisim Fedorov), he was known in revolutionary circles by the name of Aron Gobst (or Hobst in Yiddish), and is entered as such in the DBS (II-1: 272–73). But as Ia. D. Baum has pointed out his real name was indeed Gobet ('Izrail-Aron Gobet (Gobst). (Materialy dlia biografi)', in S. Dimanshtein, ed., *Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie sredi evreev* (Moscow, 1930), 185 n. 1; see also E. N. Kusheva, 'Gobst ili Gobet', *KS*, 64 (1930): 159–63), and Tscherikower 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 140–42).
- 25 Deich, 'Ershte yiden-teroristen', 1124.
- 26 Baum, 'Gobet', 191–92, 202. For an investigation report, with Gobet's name very much in evidence, see: 'Dokument o sotsialisticheskoi propagande v voiskakh deistvuiushchei armii', *Vpered! Neperiodicheskoe obozrenie*, 5 (1877): 186–89.
- 27 'Di "drite opteylung" in der zukhenish nokh Aron Gobet (1877)', in Tscher[ikower], 'Politsay-arkhivn', *HS*, 3 (1939): 812–13; Baum, 'Gobet', 192–200.
- 28 Plekhanov, 'Russkii rabochii', 159.
- 29 Ibid., 154, 160–61, and 163–69.
- 30 Deich, 'Ershte yiden-teroristen', 1125; Kusheva, 'Gobst ili Gobet', 160.
- 31 Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 137–38.
- 32 Another Jewish terrorist fitting this type was, according to Tscherikower, the would-be assassin of Loris-Melikov, Ippolit Osipovich Mlodetskii (ibid., 142–45), to be discussed in chapter 9.
- 33 R. M. Kantor, ed., "'Ispoved'" Grigoriia Gol'denberga', *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 30 (1928): 119–20.
- 34 There were altogether six children: Grigorii's brother Isaak, and four sisters (Kreina, Sura, Khaia, and Ester). All were exiled at one time or another for their activities (see, *DBS*, II: 287–88).
- 35 L. G. Deich, 'Di tragedie fun Grigori Goldenberg', *Di tsukunft*, 21 (January 1916): 69. See also, E. Tscher[ikower], 'Tsu der kharakteristik funem terrorist Grigori Goldenberg', in *HS*, 3 (1939): 815–16.
- 36 Deich, 'Di tragedie', 70.
- 37 'Svod pokazanii', *Byloe*, 8 (1907): 93–94; and Goldenberg's proclamation 'K obshchestvu', *Zemlia i Volia*, 4 (February 20, 1879), in V. Ia. Iakovlev [Bogucharskii], ed., *Revoliutsionnaia zhurnalistika semidesiatykh godov* (Paris, 1905), 226–28.

- 38 Venturi, *Roots*, 630.
- 39 Tschet[ikower], 'Politsay-arkhivn', 804–6.
- 40 The four Siberian exiles were S. K. and L. G. Koiranskii, M. I. Gordon and his wife (*DBS*, II-2: 615, 614; II-1, 297). Of those exiled to Vilna, at least two (Feiga Iadlovker and Debora Kevesh) continued to be active in the movement (Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii', 63–64). Definitely innocent was L. O. Gordon, a distant relative of the Koiranskiis, and a well-known Hebrew poet. Due to denunciations by the Orthodox establishment in St Petersburg, he was exiled to northern Russia (Tschet[ikower], 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 117–18).
- 41 Iokhel'son, 'Dalekoe proshloe', 71–72, 73–74; A. Zundelevich, 'Pis'ma k. L. Deichu', *Gruppa*, 3 (1925): 198. In the case of Kropotkin's prison escape, Natanson was the driver of the get-away vehicle and Zundelevich, as the signal-man, played the violin to alert Kropotkin that all was ready (Kropotkin, *Memoirs*, 246–58).
- 42 See, for example, Venturi, *Roots*, 609–11. The principal role of Shleisner-Natanson in Zemlia i Volia has been clearly spelled out by A. D. Mikhailov, see *Pis'ma*, 229.
- 43 Volk, *Narodnaia Volia*, 80.
- 44 Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 293–94, 286–88; L. Kulczycki, *Geschichte der russischen Revolution*, II (Gotha, 1911), 231. This was in continuation of policies pursued by Natanson already in 1876 and spelled out in January 1877 in the unpublished brochure 'Concerning the Assemblage' by Oboleshev (see *supra*, chapter 6). As McKinsey has rightly noted, the political and social-democratic ideas in this document did not agree with 'the primary motives of the populists' ('Kazan Square Demonstration', 100). This, and perhaps even more so the fact that Natanson was no longer able to influence the party after his arrest in June 1877, may explain why the manuscript was not published although it expressed the 'official opinion' of the Natansonist leadership.
- 45 Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 295.
- 46 Zundelevich, 'Pis'ma k Deichu', 210–11.
- 47 Venturi, *Roots*, 618.
- 48 This was particularly pronounced in the case of Shleisner and Mikhailov who viewed themselves, and were seen by others, as Natanson's legitimate successors, see: L. Deich, 'Na rubezhe', *Vestnik evropy*, 47 (July 1912): 169; [Mikhailov], *Pis'ma*, 227–29; Chernov, *Yidishe tuer*, 36–37.
- 49 Venturi, *Roots*, 597.
- 50 Kantor, 'Ispoved', 166–67. Pribyleva, *Narodovolets Mikhailov*, 161–62, 164.
- 51 'Svod pokazanii', *Byloe*, 8 (1907): 116.
- 52 Cited by A. V. Iakimova, 'Protsess shestnadsati terroristov – pervyi narodovol'cheskii protsess', in Iakimova ed., '*Narodnaia Volia*' *pered tsarskim sudom*, I (Moscow, 1930), 41. Mikhailov also mistrusted Goldenberg's motives and ability to carry out the assassination (Pribyleva, *Narodovolets Mikhailov*, 165).
- 53 Venturi, *Roots*, 641. A. V. Iakimova, 'Gruppa "Svoboda ili Smert"', *KS*, 24 (1926): 15–16.
- 54 M. Frolenko, cited by Venturi, *Roots*, 649, 650. For references to Aronchik's

- and Goldenberg's activity, see *DBS*, III-1: 122 and III-2: 863, and 'Svod pokazanii', *Byloe*, 8 [1907]: 88–123 *passim*.
- 55 Zundelevich, 'Pis'ma k Deichu', 207–8. Noteworthy is also that Zundelevich sought to strengthen the terrorists ranks by recruiting Andrei Zheliabov, the future leader of Narodnaia Volia (*ibid.*; see also P. S. Ivanovskaia, 'Neskol'ko slov ob A. I. Zheliabove', in *Narodovol'tsy*, III (Moscow, 1931), 21). At the time of the congress, Zundelevich was abroad negotiating with German banks an account (*Wechselkonto*) for the money expected from the Lizogub inheritance (*DBS*, III-2: 1571).
- 56 Deich, 'Chernyi Peredel', *IRS*, 2: 310–15; Zundelevich, 'Pis'ma k Deichu', 209–11.
- 57 L. Deich, *G. V. Plekhanov. Materialy dlia biografii* (Moscow, 1922), 48, and 'G. V. Plekhanov v "Zemle i Vole"', *Gruppa*, 3 (1925): 61.
- 58 Akselrod, *Perezhitoe*, 315–69; Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 378–406. The outstanding role of Deich, Aptekman, and especially Akselrod has been well brought out by N. Sergievskii ('Chernyi Peredel' i narodniki 80-kh godov', *KS*, 74 [1931]: 7–58). See also B. Ivanov's contribution ('Sergievskii kak istorik') in the same issue, especially 63–66 (Aptekman) and 75–81 (Akselrod).
- 59 Jewish membership in Chernyi Peredel probably averaged between 20 to 25 per cent during its two and a half years of existence. For instance, of the two dozen activists forming the central Chernyi Peredel in 1879–80 (sixteen of whom were former Zemlevol'tsy) six were Jews (Aptekman, Deich, Akselrod, Khotinskii, E. Rubanchik, and Plekhanova-Bograd). Just by adding in the Minsk Chernoperedel'tsy, we arrive at a number of close to twenty Jews in Chernyi Peredel during its first period.
- 60 B. Bukhbinder, 'Minskaia tipografiia "Chernogo Peredela"', *KS*, 35 (1927): 92–99; I. Getsov, 'Tipografiia "Chernogo Peredela". Vospominaniia naborshchika', *Gruppa*, 1 (1924): 123–32; S. Vol'fson, "'Chornyi Peradzel" v Mensku', *Polymia*, 3: 4 (Minsk, 1925): 76–80; Deich, *Rol'*, 313–36.
- 61 E. R. Olkhovskii, 'K istorii "Chernogo peredela" (1879–81)', in *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v poreformennoi Rossii* (Moscow, 1965), 134–41, 161; Nevskii, *Ot 'Zemli i voli'*, 185–87; O. K. Bulanova, "'Chernyi Peredel" (vospominaniia)', *Gruppa*, 1 (1924): 112–20.

8 MOTIVES OF REVOLUTION

- 1 Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 135, 131–32, 135–36.
- 2 *Ibid.*, 136.
- 3 Tscher[i]kower, 'Politsay-arkhivn', 805 (italics in the original).
- 4 Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 159.
- 5 Stepniak, *Career of a Nihilist*, 42, 46–47.
- 6 Lev Deich confirms that Kravchinskii 'undoubtedly wished to portray Zundelevich', but argues that David and his characterization as a 'Jewish patriot' corresponds little to the 'real "Moishe"' ('Zundelevich', 216). While it is true that on occasion (as in this instance) Kravchinskii tends to overemphasize Zundelevich's Jewishness in order to bring out this aspect of his personality, this does not seriously distort what we know about Zundelevich's mentality, thinking and *Weltanschauung*. This has been very well argued by A. Litvak who subjects Deich's opinion to a very detailed and

- convincing criticism (see his article: 'Aaron Zundelevich', 102–3, 105–6). Litvak, in turn, has been implicitly criticized by K. S. Pinson who, in arguing against A. Menes' characterization of Zundelevich's Jewishness (in 'Di groyse tsayt', in *Arkadi. Zamelbukh tsum andenk fun grinder fun 'Bund'* (New York, 1942), 4–7), states that there is no basis for attributing specifically Jewish motives (which Pinson equates with national concerns) to Zundelevich and Jewish socialists of the 1870s and 1880s ('Arkady Kremer, Vladimir Medem, and the Ideology of the Jewish "Bund"', *Jewish Social Studies*, 7 (1945): 236 n. 6).
- 7 Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 136 (Magat's italics). The Congress of Berlin (1878) obliged the German government to guarantee Jewish civil equality in Rumania.
 - 8 Ibid., 135–36. See also Litvak, *Vos geven*, 12–13; D. Shub, 'Evrei v russkoi revoliutsii', in *Politicheskie deiateli Rossii (1850-kh–1920-kh gg.) Sbornik statei* (New York, 1969), 357–58; Schapiro, 'Role', 153; Greenberg, *Jews in Russia*, 1: 147–49.
 - 9 Aksel'rod, *Perezhitoe*, 333–34. Cf. L. H. Haimson's interesting analysis of Akselrod's (as opposed to Plekhanov's) response to political terrorism (*The Russian Marxists and the Origin of Bolshevism* (Cambridge, MA, 1955), 36–41). See also Aptekman, *Obshchestvo*, 411–31.
 - 10 Aksel'rod, *Obshchestvo*, 341–44 (Akselrod's italics). For his intention to give Chernyi Peredel a more Western appearance, see 347–48.
 - 11 Ibid., 355–56, 369.
 - 12 Cited in B. A. Engel and C. N. Rosenthal, eds., *Five Sisters: Women against the Tsar* (New York, 1975), 224.
 - 13 Nevskii's pioneering study of the Chernoperedeltsy's transition to Marxism offers proof of this – though he failed to recognize its Jewish aspect (*Ot 'Zemli i voli'*, especially sections 3 and 4).
 - 14 Iokhel'son, *Pervye*, 16–17; Volk, *Narodnaia Volia*, 96–98, 207.
 - 15 Levin, *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie*, 495–96.
 - 16 The term 'pure constitutionalism' has been used by Volk with reference to Zlatopolskii and Zundelevich, though without linking it to their Jewishness (*Narodnaia Volia*, 201, 205).
 - 17 [S. S. Zlatopol'skii], 'Pokazanie S. S. Zlatopol'skogo 23 sentiabria 1882 g.', in S. N. Valk, ed., 'Iz narodovol'cheskikh avtobiograficheskikh dokumentov', *KA*, 20 (1927): 228–29.
 - 18 Ibid., 229–30.
 - 19 Ibid.
 - 20 Volk, *Narodnaia Volia*, 97.
 - 21 [Zlatopol'skii], 'Pokazanie', 230. For Zundelevich's Bernsteinian cast of mind and disbelief that existing social structures could be changed 'overnight', see: Shub, 'Aaron Zundelevich', 119, 121–23; N. K. Bukh, 'Pervyi protsess narodovol'tsev', *KS*, 80 (1931): 125–26, 133–34; Litvak, 'Aaron Zundelevich', 99–105.
 - 22 Kantor, 'Ispoved'', 168.
 - 23 Kantor, Introduction to 'Ispoved'', 131. For Kantor's well-documented study of the methods employed by the government and its 'new breed' of prosecutors to break down Goldenberg, see pp. 128–34.

- 24 Ibid., 133.
- 25 Ulam, *The Name of the People*, 344.
- 26 Kantor, 'Ispoved', 139. Of his socialist conviction he said: 'I personally look at socialism as a new teaching which eventually will have to take the place of religion, and a new era will begin with the role of this religion on earth' (152).
- 27 Ibid., 168–69.
- 28 Goldenberg greatly respected Loris-Melikov for having been honest with him in not promising a constitution when they met personally. He only regretted that Melikov might not have taken him seriously because he was a Jew. That his actions might be blamed on his Jewishness constantly preoccupied him. Thus, for example, in one of his statements exonerating himself from the charge of treason he writes: 'There is only one Judas, but I am not a Judas and 30 silver pieces I did not receive' (ibid., 167). Just as Goldenberg was upset that being a Jew would taint official perception of his motives, so were his Jewish comrades who felt that his 'treason' might be characterized as typically Jewish and therefore reflect negatively on their own public image. Deich, who was particularly sensitive to being stigmatized due to his Jewish origin, states for instance: 'It was especially we Jews who were deeply shocked [by Goldenberg's treason] ... Goldenberg was the first Jew who, so to speak, became famous due to his treason. He soiled the name of our people. Considering the tendency of many Christians to look upon us Jews as if we were cowards, who were capable of anything as long as it served our interests and prevented our lives from being endangered ... one had to expect that [his treason] would generate a hostile attitude towards us Jewish revolutionaries' ('Di tragedie fun Grigori Goldenberg', *Di tsukunft*, (January 1916): 71).
- 29 Volk, *Narodnaia Volia*, 98, 202–7.
- 30 As Zundelevich wrote to Deich, besides the programmatic projects tabled by Morozov and Zheliabov (representing the Anarchist and Populist opinion respectively), 'there was a third project [his own], but it was not sympathetically received and did not call forth long discussions' ('Pis'mo', 205–6; cf., Iokhel'son, *Pervye*, 16–18).

9 TECHNICIANS OF TERRORISM

- 1 Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 152.
- 2 Apparently it was Count Dmitrii Tolstoy who coined the term 'Hebrew leprosy' (J. F. Baddeley, *Russia in the 'Eighties' – Sports and Politics* (London, 1921), 186).
- 3 S. W. Baron, *The Russian Jew under Tsars and Soviets* (New York, 1976), 44.
- 4 Gurevich, 'Zikhroynes', 236. Deich, 'Smert' Arona Zundelevicha', 214.
- 5 Zundelevich, 'Pis'ma k L. Deichu', 217. Zundelevich contacted his old friend Peter Kropotkin. Despite the latter's dislike of Narodnaia Volia (though remindful of Zundelevich's part in his liberation from tsarist confinement in 1876), Kropotkin put him in touch with French communards who 'were connected with people managing a dynamite storage facility somewhere in Switzerland' (197). That Zundelevich supplied the 'first

- dynamite', should not lead us to the conclusion, arrived at by David Shub and others, that Zundelevich smuggled substantial amounts of live dynamite into Russia ('Aaron Zundelevich', 113). That this was not the case has been conclusively proven by M. R. Kantor, 'Dinamit "Narodnoi Voli"', *KS*, 57–58 (1929): 118–28.
- 6 This phrase belongs to Adam Ulam (*Name of the People*, ch. 13).
 - 7 Elias Tscherikower states that Zundelevich brought three printing presses to Russia – the last in 1879 for Narodnaia Volia (see 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 160–61, and his editorial notes to G. Gurevich's memoirs in *HS*, 3, 250, n. 45). This is incorrect. Zundelevich supplied only parts and some type for the Narodnaia Volia press, actually his second press which the Narodovoltzy had inherited from Zemlia i Volia (Deich, 'Chernyi Peredel', 308–13; N. K. Bukh, *Granat*, 40: 41; E. N. Koval'skaia, 'Pervaia tipografiia "Chernogo Peredela"', *KS*, 50 (1928): 61–63; Livshits, 'Podpol'nye tipografii', *KS*, 43 (1928): 78).
 - 8 Deich, 'Leizer Tsukerman', 240–42.
 - 9 In 1879 he also seems to have worked for M. P. Dragomanov's *Hromada* (Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 101). For the literature of Tsukerman's printing activity prior to joining Narodnaia Volia, see Haberer, 'Role', 485–86, nos. 13–15.
 - 10 S. A. Ivanova-Boreisha, 'Pervaia tipografiia "Narodnoi Voli"', *Byloe*, 9 (1906): 3; N. K. Bukh, 'Pervaia tipografiia "Narodnoi Voli"', *KS*, 57–58 (1929): 74; O. S. Liubatovich, 'Dalekoe i nedavnee', *Byloe*, 6 (1906), 113.
 - 11 Bukh, 'Pervaia tipografiia', 74; Ivanova-Boreisha, 'Pervaia tipografiia', 4–7.
 - 12 Ivanova-Boreisha, 'Pervaia tipografiia', 6. For Tsukerman's *yidishkeyt* and pronounced sense of Jewish identity, see also Liubatovich, 'Dalekoe i nedavnee', 119–20; Deich, 'Leizer Tsukerman', 243; Tscherikower, 'Revolutsionere un natsionale ideologies', 144–45.
 - 13 According to Zundelevich, Tsukerman was psychologically tortured in Peter and Paul Fortress while awaiting his deportation to Siberia. Thereafter he acted abnormally in the presence of his friends who saw him insanely agitated, screaming at prison guards 'you blood-suckers, tormentors...' ('Tsvey briv fun Aaron Zundelevich', *Royter pinkos*, 2 (1924): 173).
 - 14 Bukh, 'Pervaia tipografiia', 75. Zundelevich was arrested under the assumed name of David Brofman. After twenty-five years in eastern Siberia he was allowed to return to Vilna. In 1907 he emigrated to England and lived for the rest of his life in London where he died on 30 August, 1923 (*DBS*, III-2: 1572–73). For his London years, see D. Shub, 'Aaron Zundelevich', 118–26; and Litvak, *Vos geven*, 46–53.
 - 15 Iokhel'son, 'Dalekoe proshloe', 64–65. Besides Aronchik, other noteworthy members of the circle included A. B. Chernov, E. S. Gurevich, S. E. Lion, and I. B. Rembro (Philip Krants), all of whom were later active in Zemlia i Volia and, with the exception of Lion, in Narodnaia Volia (see *DBS*, II-2: 784–85, II-3: 1354, II-4: 1965–66; and III-2: 1033–34; and L. Zalkind, 'Evgenii Samoilovich Gurevich', *KS*, 54 (1929): 176–77).
 - 16 Deich, 'Chernyi Peredel', 314; Iokhel'son, *Pervye*, 7–13, 54–55.
 - 17 K. B. Shavrov, 'V. I. Iokhel'son', *Sovetskaia etnografiia*, 2 (1935): 5.
 - 18 Iokhel'son, *Pervye*, 22–23, 26.

- 19 Ibid., 26–28. The lists were supplied by N. V. Kletochnikov, the party's 'counter-agent' in the Third Department.
- 20 R. M. Kantor, *Gesia Gel'fman* (Moscow, 1926), 23–24.
- 21 V. I. Iokhel'son, 'Gesia Mironovna Gel'fman', in V. Iokhel'son and R. M. Kantor, *Gesia Gel'fman. Materialy dlia biografii i kharakteristiki* (Petrograd–Moscow, 1922), 11.
- 22 See especially the memoirs of O. K. Bulanova-Trubnikova, 'Stranichki vospominanii', *Byloe*, 24 (1924): 64; and Liubatovich, 'Dalekoe i nedavnee', 133.
- 23 Stepniak [Kravchinskii], *Podpol'naia Rossiia*, 143. That this passage derived from Epshtein has been confirmed by Deich ('Gesia Helfman, di groyse stile martirerin', *Di tsukunft*, 21 (April 1916): 325).
- 24 Bulanova-Trubnikova, 'Stranichki', 64–65; Kantor, 'Gel'fman v vospominaniakh sovremennikov', in Iokhel'son and Kantor, *Gel'fman*, 22; A. V. Tyrkov, 'K sobytiu 1-go marta 1881 goda', *Byloe*, 5 (1906): 151–52.
- 25 This was in continuation of previous activity in 'foreign affairs', which he had inherited from Zundelevich. For instance, in February 1880 he had gone to France to publicize Narodovoltsy terrorist politics and campaign against the extradition of Nikolai Hartman to Russia where he was sought for his part in the November assassination attempt (Zundelevich, 'Pis'ma k Deichu', 223; Iokhel'son, *Pervye*, 31–47, 50–54).
- 26 While in Siberian exile he was asked by D. A. Klements to participate in an ethnographical expedition studying the native people of eastern Siberia. Deepening his interest in the subject, he became a widely respected specialist in Siberian languages and cultures. Most of his work is deposited at the New York Public Library. He had made New York his home after leaving Soviet Russia in the 1920s.
- 27 Perhaps to these names should be also added that of Petr Abramovich Tellalov, a member of the Executive Committee. But there is no clear indication of his Jewish origin. While he has been listed as Jewish by V. A. Tvardovskaia ('Organizatsionnie osnovy "Narodnoi Voli"', *Istoricheskie zapiski*, 67 (1960): 140), N. A. Troitskii identifies him as Greek ('*Narodnaia Volia*' *pered tsarskim sudom, 1880–1891 gg.* (Saratov, 1971), 183, n. 329).
- 28 L. G. Deich, 'Lev Zlatopolski – di tragedie fun a yidishen goan oyf katorge', *Di tsukunft*, 21 (May 1916): 407–8.
- 29 *DBS*, III-2: 1540–41; L. G. Deich, 'Saveli Zlatopolski', *Di tsukunft*, 21 (June 1916): 511–14. According to A. P. Pribyleva, Savelii also perfected the techniques of the 'passport business' (*Narodovolets A. D. Mikhailov*, 19).
- 30 Tscherikower, '*Revolutsionere un natsionale idealogies*', 142; *DBS*, III-2: 1537–40.
- 31 Iokhel'son, 'Dalekoe proshloe', 70; 'G. M. Fridenson [Obituary]', *Golos minuvshogo*, 7 (1913): 282–84; Tvardovskaia, 'Organizatsionnie osnovy', 121, 133, and 137.
- 32 Troitskii, '*Narodnaia Volia*', 43; *DBS*, III: 123; Lev Deich, 'Der letster yidisher anteylnnehmer in der ermordung fun rusisher tsar', *Di tsukunft*, 21 (July 1916): 616.
- 33 *DBS*, III-2: 863; Iokhel'son, *Pervye*, 11. Kantor, 'Ispoved'', 121, and 'Dinamit', 119, 121, 122; Iakimova, 'Protsses shestnatsat' teroristov', 19.

- 34 For the prevalent exaggerations see, for example, Ulam, *In the Name of the People*, 343–44; Deich, ‘Di tragedie’, 71; and the contributors to *DBS*, III-2: 863.
- 35 R. M. Kantor, ‘Gel’fman po ofitsial’nym dokumentam’, in Iokhel’son and Kantor, ed., *Gesia Gel’fman*, 30, 34, 38–39.
- 36 Kantor, *Gesia Gel’fman*, 25.
- 37 N. I. Shebeko, *Khronika sotsialisticheskogo dvizheniia v Rossii, 1878–1887. Ofitsial’nyi otchet* (Moscow, 1906), 170, 171.
- 38 Kantor, *Gesia Gel’fman*, 28–32. Officially, her death was diagnosed as ‘suppurative inflammation of the lungs’ (see ‘Akt o smerti Gesia Gel’fman’, in Iokhel’son and Kantor, eds., *Gesia Gel’fman*, 46–47).
- 39 Stepniak [Kravchinskii], *Podpol’naia Rossiia*, 62.
- 40 Tscherikower, ‘Yidn-revolutsionern’, 152, 154–55. See also Deich (*Rol’*) and Schapiro (‘Role’).
- 41 Regarding Goldenberg’s status in Narodnaia Volia, see Tvardovskaia, ‘Organizatsionnye osnovy’, 136.
- 42 Gessen, *Istoriia*, 2: 212.
- 43 Supra, ch. 1, 1, n.n.1; Frumkin, ‘Iz istorii’, 230. See also [Liberman], ‘Iz Vilno’, and ‘Kosvennyi produkt’, *Vpered!*, 21: 660–63, and 18: 563–65.
- 44 [Iakovlev], ‘Zakliuchenie’, 58–9 (cf., supra, p. 92).
- 45 Sidorov, ‘Statisticheskie svedeniia’, 38–44. Cf., supra, p. 92–93 and see Appendix, table 1.
- 46 ‘Dokladnaia zapiska’, 65–66.
- 47 S. Agurskii, *Ocherki po istorii revoliutsionnogo dvizheniia v Belorussii (1863–1917)* (Minsk, 1928), 27–28, 231–44.
- 48 Cited in Gessen, *Istoriia*, 2: 212. Blaming the education of Jews for their radicalization and ability to spread sedition was also characteristic of reports related to the Vilna affair of 1875–76 (Bukhbinder, ‘Iz istorii’, 60–61).
- 49 Deich, ‘Di tragedie’, 73.
- 50 Gessen, *Istoriia*, 2: 212–13.
- 51 With respect to the closure of rabbinical seminaries it could be argued, of course, that the rise of Jewish radicalism influenced tsarist policy as early as 1873. Moreover, the thinking of individual officials dealing with Jewish radicals in Vilna and Minsk was clearly influenced by similar considerations in proposing the curtailment of educational opportunities for Jews.
- 52 Hourwich, ‘Zikhroynes’, *Fraye arbeyter shtime*, no. 1160 (26 May, 1922), 3.
- 53 Kulczycki, *Geschichte*, II: 327–28. The Rozovskii affair did a lot to damage the government’s image in liberal circles and even surprised the revolutionaries (Deich, ‘Nevinno poveshennye’, 134; Troitskii, ‘Narodnaia Volia’, 38). This is also described artistically by Lev Tolstoy who, in his novel *Resurrection* (Moscow, 1965), very movingly characterizes Rozovskii and the reaction of the people to his hanging (see 493–98; cf., N. Gudzii, ‘Rasskaz o kazni Lozinskogo i Rozovskogo v “Voskresenii” Tolstogo i ego istochnik’, *KS*, 93–94 (1932): 62–83).
- 54 Cited by S. L. Tsinberg, in *Istoriia evreiskoi pechati v Rossii* (Petrograd, 1915), 248. For a description of Mlodetskii’s public execution, see the 6 March 1880 issue of the London *Times* (5), and A. K. Engel’meier, ‘Kazn’ Mlodetskogo’, *Golos minuvshago*, 7–8 (1917): 184–192. On the ambiguous

- status and role of Mlodetskii in the revolutionary movement and his association with Narodnaia Volia, see Haberer, 'Role', 521, n. 110.
- 55 'The Jews in Russia', *The Times* (16 March, 1880), 4.
- 56 R. M. Kantor, ed., 'Aleksandr III o evreiskikh pogromakh, 1881–83 gg.', *Evreiskaia letopis'*, 1 (Leningrad, 1923): 149–52.
- 57 H. Rogger, *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics in Imperial Russia* (London, 1986), 133, 64; P. A. Zaionchkovskii, *The Russian Autocracy in Crisis, 1878–1882*, (Gulf Breeze, FL, 1979), 241.
- 58 Zaionchkovskii, *Russian Autocracy*, 244, 361, n. 20. For Ignatiev's initial belief and subsequent retraction that the revolutionaries caused the pogroms, see also Rogger, *Jewish Policies*, 58–62, 135–38.

10 THE POGROMS OF 1881–1882

- 1 Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 97–8, 107–8.
- 2 Tscherikower, 'Revolutsionere un natsionale ideologies' 149.
- 3 Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 98; Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 172; Berk, 'Russian Revolutionary Movement', 36.
- 4 Greenberg, *Jews in Russia*, II, 163.
- 5 Since this analysis is limited to the two principal parties of Russian revolutionary Populism in the early 1880s, Chernyi Peredel and Narodnaia Volia, some of my conclusions may not apply to the radical Jewish intelligentsia in general, but only to Jews who were organizationally associated with, or in some ways active in, these two revolutionary groupings.
- 6 Voitinskii, *Iz arkhiva Aksel'roda*, 215.
- 7 Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 113. See also M. Kiei, 'The Jewish Narodnik', *Judaism*, 19 (1970): 309; Tscherikower, 'Revolutsionere un natsionale ideologies', 174–76; Ulam, *Name of the People*, 371; Berk, 'Russian Revolutionary Movement', 25; and M. Mishkinsky in his otherwise excellent article 'The Attitude of the Southern Russian Workers' Union toward the Jews (1880–81)', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 6 (June 1982): see especially 209–10.
- 8 Greenberg, *Jews in Russia*, II, 163.
- 9 Tscherikower, 'Revolutsionere un natsionale ideologies', 174–75, see also 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 171–72. Though equating the Romanenko proclamation with 'the official position of the Russian revolutionary movement', Frankel alone does not 'fortify' his interpretation with antisemitic explanations (*Prophecy and Politics*, 113).
- 10 Voitinskii, introduction to P. Akselrod's 'O zadachakh', in *Iz arkhiva Aksel'roda*, 215.
- 11 A. Linden [Leo Motzkin], 'Prototype des Pogroms in den achtziger Jahren', in *Die Judenpogrome in Russland*, ed. Zionistische Hilfsfonds in London (Cologne, 1909), 59.
- 12 Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 101.
- 13 Cited in H. Rogger, *Jewish Policies*, 143.
- 14 Rogger, *Jewish Policies*; I. M. Aronson, *Troubled Waters. The Origins of the 1881 Anti-Jewish Pogroms in Russia* (Pittsburgh, 1990).

- 15 Goldhagen, 'Ethnic Consciousness', 492–93.
- 16 Cited in Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 98. The full text of Romanenko's proclamation ('Ispolnitel'nyi komitet ukrains'komu narodu') is cited by S. N. Valk in his article 'G. G. Romanenko (Iz istorii "Narodnoi Voli")', *KS*, 48 (1928): 50–52 (in Ukrainian).
- 17 See his revolutionary rationale for supporting the pogroms in 'Vnutrennee obozrenie', *Narodnaia Volia*, 6 (23 October 1881) – in *Literatura partii Narodnaia Volia* (n.p., 1905), especially 438–39. On Romanenko and his role in *Narodnaia Volia*, see: Valk, 'Romanenko', 35–59.
- 18 A. P. Pribyleva-Korba, "Narodnaia Volia". *Vospominaniia o 1870–1880-kh gg.* (Moscow, 1926), 196–97; L. G. Deich, 'Ia. V. Stefanovich sredi narodovo-l'tsev', *Gruppa*, 3 (1925): 110; V. Bogucharskii, *Iz istorii politicheskoi bor'by v 70-kh i 80-kh gg. XIX v.* (Moscow, 1912), 222–23; Shub, 'Evrei v russkoi revoliutsii', 359–64; Valk, 'Romanenko', 52; Volk, *Narodnaia Volia*, 138n).
- 19 A. Cahan, *The White Terror and the Red. A Novel of Revolutionary Russia* (New York, 1905), 362–63. That on rare occasions some radicals joined the *pogromshchiki* for revolutionary purposes seems to be true judging from two reports of provincial authorities (see Kantor, 'Aleksandr III o evreiskikh pogromakh', 153). At least in one instance, revolutionaries actually managed to divert the mobs away from their Jewish victims by screaming 'beat the police and the rich, and not the poor Jews'. When the *pogromshchiki* started to rummage in non-Jewish quarters, setting several Russian shops on fire, they clashed with patrolling Cossacks (V. I. Sukhomlin, 'Iz epokhi upadka partii "Narodnaia Volia"', *KS*, 24 (1926): 80). On whole question of direct revolutionary pogrom complicity, see Aronson, *Troubled Waters*, 193–216.
- 20 "Russkaia zhizn", *Zerno: rabochii listok* 3 (June 1881), in *IRS*, 2 (1924), 360–61, cited by Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 100.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 100. See also Moshe Mishkinsky's discussion of the *Zerno* article and other pogrom related Chernoperedeltsy items: "'Black Repartition" and the pogroms of 1881–1882', in Klier and Lambrosa, eds., *Pogroms*, 62–92.
- 23 G. V. Plekhanov, 'Neudachnaia istoriia partii "Narodnoi Voli"', *Sochineniia*, 24: (1927), 157–58.
- 24 Deich, *Rol'*, 7–8; A. Yarmolinsky, *Road to Revolution. A Century of Russian Radicalism* (London, 1957), 310.
- 25 "P. L. Lavrov–P. B. Aksel'rodu", Letter, London, 14 April 1882, in Voitinskii, *Iz arkhiva Aksel'roda*, 30.
- 26 Berk, 'Russian Revolutionary Movement', 36; Greenberg, *Jews in Russia*, II: 162.
- 27 Deich, 'Stefanovich', 110 n. 1.
- 28 Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 113 (italics mine).
- 29 For a good analysis of what distinguished Romanenko from the Narodovoltsy and the mainstream pro-pogrom response, see: Valk, 'Romanenko', especially 46–50, 52.
- 30 For Tikhomirov's responsibility in this affair and a critical note on why historians have equated his proclamation with the so-called 'official position', see my previous and more extensively referenced publication of this chapter in Klier and Lambrozo, eds., *Pogroms*, 128 n. 26, 130 n. 42.

- 31 [Motzkin], 'Prototype des Pogroms', 62–63.
- 32 Tscherikower, 'Revolutsionere un natsionale ideologies', 175.
- 33 Hourwich, 'Zikhroynes', 1164 (23 June 1922): 3.
- 34 [A. Cahan], *The Education of Abraham Cahan* (Philadelphia, 1969), 182–84.
- 35 Ibid., 184–86; Hourwich, 'Zikhroynes', 1163 (16 June 1922): 3.
- 36 Deich, *Rol'*, 29; Goldhagen, 'Ethnic Consciousness', 483.
- 37 Kiei, 'Jewish Narodnik', 309.
- 38 Cited by Tscherikower, 'Revolutsionere un natsionale ideologies', 177.
- 39 Hourwich, 'Zikhroynes', 1164 (23 June 1922): 3.
- 40 I. Getsov, Letter, in Deich, *Rol'*, 325–27.
- 41 Ibid. See also Mishkinsky's critical comments on the Minsk–Getsov response to the original Zagorskii article ('Black Repartition', 76–77).
- 42 Bogucharskii, *Iz istorii*, cited by Pribyleva-Korba, 'Narodnaia Volia', 196.
- 43 Deich, 'Saveli Zlatopolski', 512–14, and 'Revolutsioner–"tsionist"', 779.
- 44 Pribyleva-Korba, 'Narodnaia Volia', 196.
- 45 Ulam, *Name of the People*, 371. See also Yarmolinsky, *Road to Revolution*, 308–9. The same occurred in the summer of 1883 when local Narodovoltsy groups in southern Russia destroyed what probably was the last pro-pogrom proclamation issuing from a Narodovoltsy press in St Petersburg. But the declaration did not bear the signature of Narodnaia Volia because the printers, the Jewess Praskovia Bogoraz and the Belorussian Shebalin, vehemently objected to printing it in the name of their press (M. P. Shebalin, *Klochki vospominanii* (Moscow, 1935), 139–40).
- 46 Cited by A. Menes, 'Yidishe arbeter-bavegung', 26–27.
- 47 Ibid., 27.
- 48 In the person of Akselrod, Jewish Chernoperedeltsy may also be credited with objecting already prior to 1881 to the notion that anti-Jewish (or anti-Polish) riots should be tolerated as an expression of popular revolutionary wisdom (see *supra*, chapter 8). This may well have influenced early Chernoperedeltsy rejection of the pogroms in the form of a 'Zemlia i volia' proclamation apparently issued by the St Petersburg organization in June 1881 (see Mishkinsky, 'Black Repartition', 66–74, 95–97 – though, Mishkinsky exaggerates in juxtaposing negative Chernoperedeltsy and positive Narodovoltsy pogrom attitudes on the basis of this document).
- 49 Cited by Yarmolinsky, *Road to Revolution*, 310.
- 50 A. Ascher, 'Pavel Axelrod: A Conflict between Jewish Loyalty and Revolutionary Dedication', *The Russian Review*, 24 (1965): 249–65.
- 51 G. E. Gurevich, 'Sredi revoliutsionerov v Tsiurikhe', *Evreiskaia letopis'*, 4 (1926): 98–103; Deich, *Rol'*, 246–53, and 'Revolutsioner–"tsionist"', 777–81. See also Gurevich's memoirs, 'Zikhroynes', 224–55.
- 52 The correspondence in question was published by Deich ('L. G. Deich–P. B. Aksel'rodu') in *Gruppa*, 1 (1925): 151–62 (hereafter cited as 'Correspondence'). For a detailed discussion of the Akselrod brochure, 'O zadachakh', see Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 104–7; and Ascher, *Pavel Axelrod*, 69–78.
- 53 'Correspondence', 160 (Letter of 21 April 1882).
- 54 Gurevich, 'Sredi revoliutsionerov', 99; 'Correspondence', 153–54.
- 55 Gurevich, 'Sredi revoliutsionerov', 99.
- 56 P. B. Aksel'rod, Letter to A. Lesin [Valt], *Di tsukunft*, 9 (1924): 550.

- 57 Aksel'rod, 'O zadachakh', 218, 225–26.
- 58 'Correspondence', 151–52 (Letter of 17 March 1882), cf. also 159 (Letter of 21 April 1882).
- 59 Postscript of Deich to Lavrov's letter (14 April 1882), in Voitinskii, et al., eds., *Iz arkhiva Aksel'roda*, 31.
- 60 'Correspondence', 159–60 (Letter of 21 April 1882). The Chernoperedeltsy found themselves in difficult times indeed. Being an already endangered species on the verge of transforming themselves into Marxists and also locked into complex negotiations with Narodnaia Volia – handled almost exclusively by Deich – they could not afford any show of internal division that might harm their bargaining position *vis-à-vis* the Narodovoltsy who were determined to absorb them into their party.
- 61 Ascher, 'Pavel Axelrod', 259–60.
- 62 Aksel'rod, cited in Ascher, 'Pavel Axelrod', 262.
- 63 Cahan, *White Terror*, 395–96 (italics mine). Commenting on the novel, I. Gurvich wrote that Cahan succeeded very well in 'depicting the mood' of Jewish socialists at the time of the pogroms ('Zikhroynes', 1158 (5 May 1922): 3n).
- 64 Cahan, *White Terror*, 74–75, 341–43, 405–6.
- 65 *Ibid.*, 135.
- 66 Although a member of both Zemlia i Volia and later Narodnaia Volia, Gurevich, for example, had been situated in his activity almost exclusively in a Jewish and German Social Democratic environment. Even less embedded in the revolutionary movement were those Jews who flocked to the standards of Bilu (the Palestintsy) and Am Olam (the Amerikantsy). The vast majority of these people were merely socialist sympathizers, the so-called 'Jewish studying youth', who had no direct personal links with the movement.
- 67 Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 172. That a pro-pogrom attitude was not necessarily linked with antisemitic motives is brought out in Mishkinsky's discussion of Tkachev and his fellow 'Jacobin Populists', who endorsed the pogroms even though they had rejected Judeophobia and concomitant stereotyping of Jews prior to 1881 ('Did the Russian Jacobins [Blanquists] have a Special Attitude Towards Jews', in A. Rapoport-Albert and S. J. Zipperstein, eds., *Jewish History* (London, 1988), 319–41).
- 68 Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 158.
- 69 Zundelevich, 'Pis'ma k L. G. Deichu', 211. The 'golden charter' refers to Deich's involvement in the Chigirin affair. For Zundelevich's own negative reaction to the pogroms to the point of losing all hope that Russia could be rid of antisemitism in decades to come, see A. Litvak, 'Aaron Zundelevich', *Royter pinkos*, 2 (Warsaw, 1924): 105–6.
- 70 [G. E. Gurevich], Personal papers of Grigorii Evseevich Gurevich, Tscherikower Archives, YIVO Institute for Jewish Research (New York), file 1161, folio 86302–86303.
- 71 Tscherikower, 'Revolutsionere un natsionale ideologies', 174–75. In support of this claim Tscherikower refers to 'Prejudices of our social revolutionaries against Jews' ('Predrassudki nashikh sotsial'nihk revoliutsionerov protiv evreev' published in B. Sapir, ed., *Vpered! 1873–1877*, II: 497–510 [Appendix no. 4]). But actually this document proves the contrary. Gurevich

who had received the manuscript in 1876 from unknown sources in Russia, advised the editors of *Vpered!* not to publish 'Prejudices' because in his and his Jewish comrades' opinion the complaints of the author against Russian socialists were completely exaggerated (see letter of Gurevich to the editors of *Vpered!* (2 April 1876), *ibid.*, 346 [Document, no. 157]).

72 Hourwich, 'Zikhroynes', 1158 (5 May 1922): 3.

11 EPIGONES AND PIONEERS

- 1 Narodnaia Volia finally expired in the mid-1890s. See vol. III of *Narodovol'tsy. Sbornik statei i materialov, sostavlennyi uchastnikami narodovol'cheskogo dvizheniia*, ed., A. V. Iakimova-Dikovskaia et al., 3 volumes (Moscow, 1928–31) – its list of Narodovol'tsy ends with 1896. Troitskii ('Narodnaia Volia') considers the closing date 1891 and Norman Naimark 1894 (*Terrorists and Social Democrats. The Russian Revolutionary Movement Under Alexander III* (Cambridge, MA, 1983). But there is general agreement among historians that the years 1887–89 mark the end of organized activity in the name of Narodnaia Volia.
- 2 Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 42. Cf. P. K. Peshekerov, 'Propaganda narodovol'tsev sredi rabochikh v Rostove-na-Donu v 1882–1884 gg.', *Narodovol'tsy*, 1 (1928): 116.
- 3 B. N[ikolaev]skii, Review article of A. N. Bakh's *Zapiski narodovol'tsa* (Leningrad, 1929), *KS*, 59 (1929): 216.
- 4 Pribyleva-Korba, 'Narodnaia Volia', 86, 170, 190, 210. A. P. Korba was the only other committee member active in St Petersburg after April 1881, though she was absent for most of the year, returning permanently only in 1882. Grinberg, like Zlatopolskii, had joined the party in 1879 because of its explicit commitment 'to obtain, above all else, political freedom' ('Rech' Kh. G. Grinberga', *Byloe*, 12 (1906): 245–46). While Zlatopolskii became a full-fledged member of the Executive Committee, Grinberg was the 'hostess' of its dynamite workshop where she also took part in the production of explosives. Active in this workshop was also Fanni Moreinis, formerly a Nikolaev radical like Zlatopolskii and her friend Grinberg (*Granat*, 40: 298–99; *DBS*, III-2: 981; Kh. G. Grinberg-Kon, 'Episod iz zhizni narodovol'tsev', *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 7 (1922): 241–43).
- 5 Pribyleva-Korba, 'Narodnaia Volia', 170. See also: 'Iz istorii narodovol'cheskogo dvizheniia sredi voennykh v nachale 80-kh godov', *Byloe*, 8 (1906): 161–77; and Zlatopolskii's biography in *DBS*, III-2: 1541.
- 6 On the supposedly critical attitude of the Executive Committee with regard to Zlatopolskii's 'hiring' of the Degaevs, see Pribyleva-Korba, 'Narodnaia Volia', 165, 170. This has been contradicted by Deich (*Provokatory i terror. Po lichnym vospominaniiam* (Tula, 1926), 7; see as well Zasulich, *Vospominaniia*, 135 n. 151). Nonetheless Deich does make Zlatopolskii responsible for the Degaev affair as it evolved in 1882–83 ('Saveli Zlatopolski', 514). For literature on *Degaevshchina* see: 'Degaevshchina (Materialy i dokumenty)', *Byloe*, 4 (1906): 18–38; D. A. Troitskii, 'Degaevshchina', *Voprosy istorii*, 3 (1976): 125–33, and Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 53–59.
- 7 A. V. Pribylev, *Zapiski narodovol'tsa* (Moscow, 1930), 23, 64 n. 3, 81.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 94. The police crackdown took place in the night of 4–5 June and netted

- 120 persons – including Pribylev, Grosman, Grinberg, and A. Korba (47–49; Shebeko, *Khronika*, 210–11).
- 9 M. A. Krotov, *Iakutskaia ssylka, 70–80-kh godov.* (Moscow, 1925), 225, no. 237; D. Iakubovich, ‘R. F. Iakubovich-Frank’, in M. A. Braginskii and K. M. Tereshkovich, eds., *Iakutskaia tragediia* (Moscow, 1975), 171–75; Shebalin, *Klochki vospominanii*, 99, 319–20. For a good analysis of the establishment and radicalizing influence of women’s medical courses in St Petersburg, starting in 1869 and closed down in 1887 due to governmental suspicion that too many *kursistki* turned revolutionary, see B. A. Engel, ‘Women Medical Students in Russia 1872–1882: Reformers or Rebels?’, *Journal of Social History*, 12 (Spring 1979): 394–414. While in 1872 only 4.5 per cent of *kursistki* were Jewish, they composed almost 33 per cent in 1878–79 (*ibid.*, 398).
 - 10 Tyrkov, ‘K sobytiu’ 152.
 - 11 I. I. Popov, ‘Revoliutsionnye organizatsii v Peterburge 1882–85 g.g’, and V. A. Bodaev, ‘N. M. Flerov i “Podgotovitel’naia gruppa partii Narodnoi Voli”’, in *Narodovol’tsy*, 1 (1928): 50–51, and 2 (1929): 16–17; Kulczycki, *Geschichte*, 2: 331–32; Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 42–44.
 - 12 Tyrkov, ‘K sobytiu’ 152–53, 161; Venturi, *Roots*, 695. N. Kogan-Bernshtein, ‘Panni Pavlovich Podbel’skii’, in Braginskii, *Iakutskaia tragediia*, 109–11; Krotov, *Iakutskaia ssylka*, 191, no. 116. It is interesting to note here that Bernshtein had been selected by Andrei Zheliabov to be one of the principal assassins. But as previously in the case of G. Goldenberg, the Executive Committee reversed this decision because it was afraid of an antisemitic backlash should a Jew assassinate Alexander II. Subsequently, Kogan-Bernshtein made his way to Moscow where he joined Narodnaia Volia’s Workers’ Section. But already in April 1881 he was arrested and sentenced administratively to five years of eastern Siberian exile.
 - 13 Tan-Bogoraz, *Granat*, 40: 439–40; M. A. Krol’, ‘Vospominaniia o I. Ia. Shternberge’, *KS*, 58–59 (1929): 224–25; L. Shternberg, ‘Pamiati L’va Matveevicha Kogana-Bernshteina’, in Braginskii, *Iakutskaia tragediia*, 100–1.
 - 14 Dobruskina, *Granat*, 40: 123; Shebalin, *Klochki*, 27–28, 126–28; Popov, ‘Revoliutsionnye organizatsii’, 50–53, 58.
 - 15 Shebalin, *Klochki*, 125, 128–47, 319–20; Livshits, ‘Podpol’nye tipografii’, *KS*, 50 (1929): 72–74, and 51: 59–62. The type for the Moscow press was supplied by the Minsk circle (Liubatovich, ‘Dalekoe i nedavnee’, 137–38).
 - 16 Shebalin, *Klochki*, 149; Livshits, ‘Podpol’nye tipografii’, 51: 61.
 - 17 Livshits, ‘Podpol’nye tipografii’, 51: 62; Shebalin, *Klochki*, 150–51, 155, 344–45; Shebeko, *Khronika*, 242–44. For a lucid description of *Degaevshchina* and the assassination of Sudeikin, see Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 53–54.
 - 18 On this so-called Lopatin phase of Narodnaia Volia, see Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 62–67.
 - 19 M. V. Bramson, ‘Otryvki iz vospominanii (1883–1886)’, in *Narodovol’tsy*, 1 (1928): 83–86. See also the biographies of Bramson and M. M. Zalkind, in *DBS*, III-1: 411–13, and III-2: 1480–81.
 - 20 Livshits, ‘Podpol’nye tipografii’, 51: 67, n. 1. For the group’s connection

- with the ‘military organization’, see M. A. Braginskii, ‘Iz vospominanii o voenno-revoliutsionnoi organizatsii (1884–1886 g.g.)’, in *Narodovol'tsy*, 2 (1929):113–27; and Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 122–27.
- 21 Tan-Bogoraz, *Granat*, 40: 441. On Shternberg and Krol, see the latter’s ‘Vospominaniia’, 226.
 - 22 Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 99.
 - 23 Minsk and Kiev stand out particularly in this respect, and offer good examples of the pioneering effort of Jewish Narodovol'tsy (and Chernoperedel'tsy in the case of Minsk) in creating a labour movement, both Jewish and Russian. On Minsk, see especially Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 201–12; and Hourwich, ‘Zikhroynes’, *Freye arbeyter shtime*, nos. 1160, 1194–1204. For Jewish activists in Kiev – especially the Levinskii–Zalkind group – see: Zalkind, ‘Vospominaniia narodovol'tsa’, 90–94; I. I. Popov and O. S. Meer, ‘Pamiati L. S. Zalkinda’, *KS*, 60 (1929): 173–77; O. Meer, ‘Pamiati otoshedshikh’, in Dimanshtein, *Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie*, 282–86; L. E. Shishko, ‘Poslednii period Narodnoi Voli’, in A. Tun, *Istoriia revoliutsionnago dvizheniia v Rossii*, ed., L. E. Shishko (Petrograd, 1917), 269–80.
 - 24 A student activist at Kiev University, Bakh (also known as Aleksei Nikolaevich) was expelled in 1878 and exiled to Ekaterinoslav. Returning to Kiev in January 1882, he joined the Levinskii–Zalkind group and organized the Kiev Central Group of Narodnaia Volia in the summer and fall of 1882. Subsequently, he travelled throughout Central and Southern Russia trying to organize revolutionary circles in Kharkov, Iaroslavl', Kazan, and Rostov (A. N. Bakh, *Zapiski narodovol'tsa* (Moscow, 1931), xviii–xxii [autobiography], 3–90; *DBS*, III-1: 220–24).
 - 25 Bakh, *Zapiski*, xviii; V. I. Sukhomlin, ‘Iz epokhi upadka partii “Narodnaia Volia”’, *KS*, 28–29 (1926): 61–62.
 - 26 A. N. Bakh, ‘Vospominaniia narodovol'tsa’, *Byloe*, 14 (1907): 193–95.
 - 27 Bakh, *Zapiski*, 110–11, 114, 124, n. 114. Contemporaneously, 1200 copies were printed on the press of the ‘young Narodovol'tsy’, set up by Iakubovich in Dorpat in the summer of 1884. This press was in operation until February 1885. Its Jewish associate, Avraam Gekkelman, became an agent of the Okhrana and informed on the press (R. M. Kantor, ‘O Derptskei narodovol'cheskoi tipografii’, in *Narodovol'tsy*, 2 (1929): 95–102; Sukhomlin, ‘Iz epokhi’, 28–29: 94–6; Shebeko, *Khronika*, 284–85).
 - 28 Shebeko, *Khronika*, 281.
 - 29 A. Kulakov, ‘O trekh predateliakh’, *KS*, 67 (1930): 81. The operation against Tolstoi and Pleve was supervised by S. Ivanov and closely involved four Jews: Saul Lisianskii, Ivanov’s principal assistant in Kharkov; Iakov Frenkel and Moisei Lintvarev, who supplied the dynamite; and Roza Lev from Rostov (Shebeko, *Khronika*, 281–84; Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 94–95).
 - 30 S. Ivanov, cited by Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 97.
 - 31 Sukhomlin, ‘Iz epokhi’, 28–29: 64–67.
 - 32 Bakh, *Zapiski*, 166–67, 124, 240 n. 114, 192–210.
 - 33 A. Shekhter-Minor, ‘Iuzhno-russkaia narodovol'cheskaia organizatsiia’, in *Narodovol'tsy*, 1 (1928): 133–34.

- 34 Krol', 'Vospominaniia', 225–26; Shekhter, 'Organizatsiia', 133.
- 35 Krol', 'Vospominaniia', 126–27. [L.Ia. Shternberg], 'Politicheskii terror v Rossii 1884', in Sapir, ed., *Lavrov-gody emigratsii*, II: 572–94.
- 36 [Shternberg], 'Politicheskii terror', 573, 579; Krol', 'Vospominaniia', 227.
- 37 B. D. Orzhikh, 'V riadakh "Narodnoi Voli"', in *Narodovol'tsy*, 3 (1931): 75.
- 38 Sukhomlin, 'Iz epokhi', *KS*, 24 (1926): 84–5.
- 39 Ibid., 24: 77, 84, 86; 28–29: 70, and kn. 27: 66. Grigorii Feldsher substituted for Frenkel in 1883–84 (Orzhikh, 'V riadakh', 88–90). On Shlemenzon see especially G. Borziakov, 'Revoliutsionnaia molodezh' v Odesse v 1882–1884 gg.', *KS*, 57–58 (1929): 129–58.
- 40 Orzhikh, 'V riadakh', 88–89, 92 (Orzhikh's italics).
- 41 Orzhikh, 'V riadakh', 107–8; Kulakov, 'Avtobiografiia', *KS*, 64 (1930): 168–69; Shekhter, 'Organizatsiia', 132.
- 42 The Novocherkassk press was set up by Zakharii Vladimirovich Kogan, who had come back to Russia specifically for this purpose. In 1883–84 he had worked together with Iakov Frenkel and Vladimir Iokhelson in the Narodnaia Volia press in Geneva (Livshits, 'Podpol'nye tipografii', kn. 51: 66–67). For a characterization of Kogan and his brilliance as a 'technician of revolution', see Sukhomlin, 'Iz epokhi', 24: 76–77.
- 43 N. Tan[-Bogoraz], 'Povesti proshloi zhizni', *Russkoe bogatstvo*, 9 and 10 (1907), 9: 107–11, 118–19; Kulakov, 'Avtobiografiia', 169–70.
- 44 Orzhikh, 'V riadakh', 105; Tan, 'Povesti', 10: 150.
- 45 Orzhikh, 'V riadakh', 109. When Poliakov returned to Ekaterinoslav from exile in 1900, he found that many of the workers he had propagandized in 1885–86 had joined the Zionist movement (M. M. Poliakov, 'Razгром Ekaterinoslavskoi narodovol'cheskoi gruppy v 1886 g.', in *Narodovol'tsy*, 1 (1928): 145–50).
- 46 Shekhter, 'Organizatsiia', 134–35; A. A. Kulakov, "'Narodnaia Volia" na iuge v polovine 80-kh gg.', in *Narodovol'tsy*, 1 (1928): 141, and 'Avtobiografiia', 169.
- 47 Shekhter, 'Organizatsiia', 135. According to Shekhter, those supporting terrorism were in the majority. This, however, could only have been a majority of four plus one: namely, the Jews Orzhikh, Bogoraz, Shternberg, Shekhter, and probably the Russian V. N. Brazhnikov (cf. Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 100).
- 48 Orzhikh, 'V riadakh', 124.
- 49 Ibid., 124–25; Shekhter, 'Organizatsiia', 135.
- 50 Krol', 'Vospominaniia', 228.
- 51 Orzhikh, 'V riadakh', 125.
- 52 Shekhter, 'Organizatsiia', 135–36; Orzhikh, 'V riadakh', 125–26; Livshits, 'Podpol'nye tipografii', 51: 68–69. On titles and quantity produced, see also Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 107–8.
- 53 Orzhikh, 'V riadakh', 148–51, 125.
- 54 Orzhikh's principal 'contact man' in Kharkov had been Aleksandr Shekhter (Orzhikh, 'V riadakh', 94–101, 142, 163). In spite of the latter's arrest and that of many other activists of the Kharkov group in December 1885, this organization was still intact. This was particularly due to new Jewish recruits – especially people like M. V. Gelrud, M. A. Ufliand, S. M. Ratin, and

- L. V. Freifeld (see V. P. Denisenko, 'Khar'kovskaia gruppа partii "Narodnoi Voli" 1885–87 gg.', and L. V. Freifel'd, 'Iz zhizhni narodovol'cheskikh organizatsii kontsa 80-kh godov', in *Narodovol'tsy*, 2 (1929): 128–56).
- 55 Tan, 'Povesti', 10: 151; Shekhter, 'Organizatsiia', 137.
- 56 Tan, 'Povesti', 10: 158.
- 57 *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 110.
- 58 Kogan, 'Tul'skaia tipografiia', 110. On the activity and publications of the Tula press, see also: Livshits, 'Podpol'nye tipografii', 51: 69–71.
- 59 On Zubatov's relationship with the Gots circle and his role in its destruction, see: Kogan, 'Tul'skaia tipografiia', 111; K. Tereshkovich, 'Moskovskaia molodezh' 80-kh godov i Sergei Zubatov', *Minuvshie gody*, 5–6 (1908): 207–9; M. R. Gots, 'S. V. Zubatov', *Byloe*, 9 (1906): 63–68; and J. Schneiderman, *Sergei Zubatov and Revolutionary Marxism* (Ithaca, 1976), 48–52.
- 60 Tan-Bogoraz, *Granat*, 40: 443. For other prominent Jewish activists personifying the continuity between the 'old Populism' of Narodnaia Volia (and, in the case of Natanson, Zemlia i Volia) and the 'new Populism' of the PSR, see V. Chernov, *Yidishe tuer*, and Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 258–87.

12 CONCLUSION: HASKALAH AND THE SOCIALIST PROMISE OF SALVATION

- 1 *Supra*, p. 92.
- 2 Cited in Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 92.
- 3 Shebeko, *Khronika*, 356.
- 4 Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 92.
- 5 Other than the passage cited above, there is no indication in *Khronika* that Shebeko was trying to vent anti-Jewish prejudices or that he was guided by antisemitic motives in writing his report.
- 6 Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 217–22. For bio-bibliographical information on Ginsburg and Dembo, see *DBS*, III-2: 803–5 and 1113–15. About their revolutionary career and tragic deaths (Dembo in 1889 while experimenting with explosives, and Ginsburg's suicide in Shlüsselburg in 1891), see – on Ginsburg: L. Freifel'd, 'Svetloi pamiatii S. M. Ginsburg', *KS*, 12 (1924): 259–71; [P. L. Lavrov], 'Neopublikovannye pis'ma P. L. Lavrova', *KS*, 39 (1928): 42–49; N. A. Morozov, 'Teni minuvshago', in *Narodovol'tsy*, 3 (1931): 44–46; and – on Dembo: S. Rappaport, 'The Life of a Revolutionary Emigré', *YIVO Annual*, 6 (1951): 211–13; L. Aksel'rod-Ortodoks, 'Iz moikh vospominanii', *KS*, 63 (1930): 23–24, 27, 33–34.
- 7 In 1888, the tsarist police linked 86 Jews, i.e. 56 per cent in a total of 154 Russian émigrés, to anti-government activity (Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 222). According to Shebeko, Jews comprised 35 per cent of the political emigration in 1886–88 (*Khronika*, 325–33). Between 1878 and 1887 Jews ranked first with 50 per cent (followed by the Poles with 42 per cent) in western Russia, and probably with a less high percentage also in southwestern Russia after 1884–85 (Kappeler, 'Charakteristik', 530–37).

- 8 Baron, *The Russian Jew*, 139; Greenberg, *Jews in Russia*, I: 149. For a critical note on the Baron–Greenberg estimate, see Haberer, ‘Role’, 666, n. 18.
- 9 For the 16 and 17–18 per cent calculation, see my discussion (‘Role’, 663–65) of data in I. Avakumovic, ‘A Statistical Approach to the Revolutionary Movement in Russia, 1878–1887’, *SR*, 18(1959): 182–86 (based on Shebeko’s *Khronika*); Kappeler, ‘Charakteristik’, 524, 528–30; Troitskii, ‘*Narodnaia Volia*’, 164–93, and ‘Uchastniki narodovol’cheskogo dvizheniia (1879–1896)’, in *Narodovol’tsy*, 3 (1931): 289–314 (for a statistical breakdown of data in Troitskii and *Narodovol’tsy*, see Appendix, Table 2 and 3). That the figure of 20 per cent was well within the realm of possibility is indicated by Kappeler’s statistics for 1881/82–87 which yield a Jewish ratio of 20 per cent, and Troitskii’s listing of Narodovol’tsy defendants of whom 22 per cent were Jewish (‘Charakteristik’, 529; ‘*Narodnaia Volia*’, 171–99).
- 10 Orlov, ‘Statistical Analysis’, 6.
- 11 For point 1 (1871–72), I relied on Orlov (‘Statistical Analysis’, 6); point 2 (1873–76) is based on Merkulov’s 6.5 per cent (see Appendix, Table 1, also corroborated by Orlov); point 3 rests on Kappeler’s 9 per cent for 1878–79 (‘Charakteristik’, 524); points 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 are derived from the list in *Narodovol’tsy* as shown in Appendix, table 3. In calculating the value for these latter points, I observed a two-year interval accounting for the fact that, for example, people whose revolutionary career in Russia ended in 1883–84 or 1891–92 were most likely active in 1881–82 and 1889–90 respectively. Adopting the same sliding principle for Troitskii’s statistics (1880–91) yields a similar pattern with respect to points 4 to 8 (see Appendix, table 2).
- 12 Without shifting years to account for the time in which revolutionaries listed in *Narodovol’tsy* and Troitskii were actually active, the averages that can be calculated from these two sources for 1885–90 amount to 19.6 per cent and 26.4 per cent respectively (for the extremely high Jewish ratio in some of these years, see Appendix, tables 2 and 3). Naimark estimates that Jewish participation in these years was 21 per cent (*Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 265 n. 3).
- 13 This estimate is higher than Naimark’s, who in commenting on Shebeko’s 80 per cent states that ‘a more accurate figure would be approximately 35 per cent for 1886 and 20–25 for the period of 1885–90 (*Terrorists and Social Democrats*, 92). A precise ratio of Jewish participation in the South is difficult to calculate since none of the available statistics indicate regional differences.
- 14 M. Bramson, ‘Iakutskaia tragediia (1889 g.–1924 g.)’, in Braginskii, *Iakutskaia tragediia*, 8–17; O. S. Minor, ‘Iakutskaia drama 22-go marta 1889 goda’, *Byloe*, 9 (1906): 137–38. Those killed or who died of their wounds were S. A. Pik, G. Shur, I. Notkin, and S. Gurevich. The other two were the Russians P. A. Mukhanov and P. P. Podbelskii.
- 15 Jews made up 32 per cent (93 out of 288) of political exiles in Iakutsk province between 1870 and 1890. Since the majority arrived only after 1885, they probably made up half of the Iakutsk exile population in the second half of the 1880s (‘Materialy k biograficheskomu slovariu iakutskoi politicheskoi ssylki 70-kh–80-kh gg.’, in Krotov, *Iakutskaia ssylka*, pp. 163–242). In Irkutsk province, where the exiles were concentrated around Kara, Jews averaged

- close to 15 per cent for the two decades (G. Osmolovskii, 'Kariitsy. [Materialy dlia statistiki russkago revoliutsionnago dvizheniia]', *Minuvshie gody*, 7 (1908): 119–55). But in Kara almost 30 per cent of women exiled were Jewesses in 1884–90 (Pribyleva-Korba, 'Narodnaia volia', 221). For the cruelty and lawlessness of political trials involving Jews in the 1880s, see Troitskii, 'Narodnaia Volia', 144–221.
- 16 Minor, 'Iakutskaiia drama', 146–47.
 - 17 Gausman, cited by Minor, 'Iakutskaiia drama', 145. See also Gausman's Letter to Comrades, 7 August 1889, and Letter to his Daughter, 6 August 1889, and Kogan-Bernshtein's Letter to Comrades, 6 August 1889, and especially his moving letter to his son, 6 August 1889 ('Pis'ma osuzhdennykh Iakutian', *Byloe*, 9 [1906]: 148–50, 151–53). These are also published in Braginskii, *Iakutskaiia tragediia*, 72–83.
 - 18 Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 172.
 - 19 This crucial distinction between socialist assimilationism and assimilation *per se* has been vividly portrayed in the antithetical characters, Clara and Volodia, in A. Cahan's novel, *White Terror*, see especially 143–45, 212–14.
 - 20 Cited by O. Meer from L. S. Zalkind's unpublished memoirs, 'Pamiati otoshedshikh', in Dimanshtein, *Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie*, 284–85 (Zalkind was told about this by Bernshtein's wife Natalia Osipovna).
 - 21 Tscherikower, 'Revolutsionere un natsionale idealogies', 179–80 and, similarly, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 172. The prevalent view about the lack of 'genuine' Jewish motives (usually equated with Jewish national sentiment) is best summarised by the late Leonard Schapiro ('Role', 153–56). See also Goldhagen, 'Ethnic Consciousness', 479–96; and Kiei, 'Jewish Narodnik', 295–310. Most categorical are Salo Baron (*Russian Jew*, 139–40) and Semen Dubnow, who wrote: the Jewish revolutionaries' 'idealistic fight for general freedom lacked a Jewish note, the endeavour to free their own nation which lived in greater thralldom than any other' (*History of the Jews*, II: 224).
 - 22 Orlov, 'Statistical Analysis', 5.
 - 23 Goldhagen, 'Ethnic Consciousness', 485 (italics added).
 - 24 This three-stage pattern is derived from Robert Brym's sociological analysis of the 'embedding process' (classification, declassification, and reclassification) of Jewish radicals, which, in his opinion, explains the ideological divergence of Jewish socialists into labour Zionists, Bundists, Mensheviks, and Bolsheviks (*Jewish Intelligentsia*, chapter 3).
 - 25 G. R. Mork, 'German Nationalism and Jewish Assimilation', *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, XXII (1977): 87. Here 'identificational assimilation' is defined as the acceptance of the immigrant into the host society signifying 'the absence of prejudice, of discrimination, and of power and value conflict'.
 - 26 This is very well brought out in E. Tscher[ikower], 'Tsu der kharakteristik funem terrorist Grigori Goldenberg', *HS*, 3 (1939): 815–16.
 - 27 Cited by Meyzil, 'Leizer Tsukerman', 98.
 - 28 Citing these manifestations at the expense of contrary phenomena has become a favoured pastime of historians who liberally paint the movement with an antisemitic brush and are quick to pin the antisemitic label on prominent revolutionaries. Here the first prize goes to Stephan Berk ('Russian Revolutionary Movement', 23–39).

- 29 On Finkelstein's nationalist conversion, see Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 102, 123. He became a very active Zionist, translating Pinsker's *Auto-emancipation* into English in 1890, serving as the secretary of the Zionist Federation in England, and later participating in the London Society of Territorialists (Rejzen, *Leksikon*, 3:95–99; Vinchevski, *Gezamlte verk*, X: 2, 222–24). Davidovich dedicated himself after the pogroms to the 'national enlightenment of the Jewish youth' and thought to achieve this through the writing of educational books (Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii', 43–44).
- 30 A. Liesin, 'Epizodn', *HS*, 3: 193, 203.
- 31 'O zadach[akh] deiatel'n[osti] partii v narode', *Narodnaia Volia*, 10 (September 1884), in *Literatura*, 674. For Lopatin's elaborate discussion why such an attitude was not acceptable, see 671–75.
- 32 Il'iashevich [Rubanovich], 'Chto delat' evreiam v Rossii?', *Vestnik narodnoi voli*, 5 (1886): 103, 122, 123.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 124–25.
- 34 *Ibid.*, 123–24.
- 35 It was not until the 1890s, however, that Jewish revolutionaries made a concerted effort to propagandize the Jewish working class. This was not only because of Narodnaia Volia's 'revolutionary elitism' and devotion to terrorism (Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 119–20), but also because a Jewish working class had not yet crystallized in the Pale and Jewish activists were still reluctant to recognize in the Jewish artisan a proletarian (Menes, 'Di groyse tsayt', 3, 7). Nonetheless the beginning was made in the mid-1880s and gathered momentum especially in places like Belostok, Vilna, and Minsk (Menes, 'Yidishe arbeter-bavegung', 17–36).
- 36 Akselrod, cited by Ascher, 'Pavel Axelrod', 262.
- 37 Schapiro, 'Role', 153.
- 38 Curiously enough, these were precisely the characteristics which Schapiro later on identifies as 'specifically Jewish motives' of Jews active in Russian Social Democracy, including the Bund (*ibid.*, 155–64).
- 39 *Ibid.*, 153; cf. Tscherikower, 'Yidn-revolutsionern', 131–35.
- 40 Aksel'rod, *Perezhito*, 341–44.
- 41 Schapiro, 'Role', 153.
- 42 This has been extremely well demonstrated by Naimark, *Terrorists and Social Democrats*, especially in chapter 8.
- 43 For the latter contribution, see A. K. Wildman, 'Russian and Jewish Social Democracy', in Alexander and Janet Rabinovich, eds., *Revolution and Politics in Russia* (Bloomington, 1972), 75–87.
- 44 See, for example, M. Hildermeier, *Die Sozialrevolutionäre Partei Russlands* (Cologne, 1978); and M. Perrie, 'The Social Composition and Structure of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party before 1917', *Soviet Studies*, 24: 2 (1972): 223–50. The data compiled by Perrie show that close to one-third of the Party's top leadership was Jewish, and that almost 15 per cent of the delegates to the First Party Congress were Jewish. The Party's acknowledged leader Viktor Chernov paid tribute to the Jewish SRs in *Yidishe tuer*. So far, only Jonathan Frankel has addressed the presence of Jews *qua* Jews in the PSR, specifically of Anskii and Zhitlovskii (see *Prophecy and Politics* and 'Socialism and Jewish Nationalism').

Bibliography

Only sources consulted for this work or mentioned in the text are listed here.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Archives

YIVO Archives of Jewish Research (New York)

Tscherikower Archive: Personal papers of Grigorii Evseevich Gurevich, 1880–1924. RG 83: files 1155 (folio 85 746–55); 1161 (folio 86 227, 96 277, 96 306–3, 86 370); 1162 (folio 86 387).

Records of the Rabbinical School and Teachers' Institute, Vil RG 24: files 24, 115, 151, 161, 170, 164.

BUND Archives of the Jewish Labor Movement (New York)

Zundelevich Archive: Fond ME1–146, ME1–147.

International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam)

Aksel'rod Archive: Deich–Aksel'rod and Aptekman–Aksel'rod correspondence, 1882, 1887.

Dom Plekhanova Archives of the M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library (St Petersburg)

Deich Archive: AD. fond 1097 (Aksel'rod–Deich correspondence, 1912–14); AD.8.488 ('Doklada tov. L. Deich: 'Seredina 70-kh gg. i proekt izdaniia zhur. "Narodnik"'); AD.12.1 ('Ocherki po istorii russkogo revoliutsionnogo dvizheniia. Semidesiatniki, 1860–70-e gg. '); AD. 11.6 ('D. A. Klements').

Encyclopaedias and dictionaries

Entsiklopedicheskii slovar' Granat. 7th ed., XL: 'Avtobiografii revoliutsionnykh deiatelei russkogo sotsialisticheskogo dvizheniia 70–80-kh godov'. Moscow, 1927.

Deiateli revoliutsionnogo dvizheniia v Rossii. Bio-bibliograficheskii slovar'. Edited by F. Kon, V. Vilenskii-Sibiriakov, et al., 5 vols. Moscow, 1927–34.

Evreiskaia entsiklopediia. Svod znaniia o evreistve i ego kul'ture v proshlom i nastoiashchem, 16 vols. St Petersburg, n.d. (Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, edited by C. H. van Schooneveld, Mouton, 1969).

Reijzen, Z. *Leksikon fun der yidisher literatur, prese un filologie*, 4 vols. Vilna, 1928–30.

Books and articles (memoirs, documents, police reports, testimonies, correspondence, biographies, programmes, etc.)

Aksel'rod, P. B. 'O zadachakh evreisko-sotsialisticheskoi intelligentsii'. In V. S. Voitinskii, B. I. Nikolaevskii, and L. O. Tsederbaum-Dan, eds., *Iz arkhiva P. B. Aksel'roda, 1881–1896*, 215–29. Berlin, 1924.

Perezhito i peredumannoe. Berlin, 1923.

'Russland'. *Jahrbuch für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, II (1881): 261–306.

Aksel'rod-Ortodoks, L. 'Iz moikh vospominanii'. *KS*, 63 (1930): 22–42.

Aptekman, O. V. 'Dve dorogie teni. (Iz vospominanii o G. V. Plekhanove i M. A. Natansone kak semidesiatnikakh)'. *Byloe*, 16 (1921): 3–14.

'Moskovskie revoliutsionnye kruzhki'. *Russkoe proshloe*, 1 and 2 (1923): 43–57, 89–103.

Obshchestvo 'Zemlia i Volia' 70-kh gg. Po lichnym vospominaniiam. Petrograd, 1924.

Arkadi. *Zamlbukh tsum ondenk fun grinder fun 'Bund' Arkadi Kremer (1865–1935)*. New York, 1942.

Bakh, A. N. 'Vospomaniia narodovol'tsa'. *Byloe*, 13, 14, 15 (1907): 117–53, 190–215, 200–38.

Zapiski narodovol'tsa. Moscow, 1931.

Baum, Ia. D. 'K istorii khar'kovskikh revoliutsionnykh kruzhkov nachala 70-kh gg'. *KS*, 77 (1931): 125–34.

'Israil-Aron Gobet (Gobst). (Materialy dlia biografii)'. In *Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie sredi evreev*, 185–205. Edited by S. Dimanshtein.

B[aum], Ia. D., ed. 'Programma dlia kruzhkov samo-obrazovaniia i prakticheskoi deiatel'nosti'. *KS*, 67 (1930): 89–106.

Bazilevskii, B. [Iakovlev, V. Ia.], ed. *Gosudarstvennyiia prestupleniia v Rossii v XIX veke. Sbornik iz politicheskikh protsessov i drugikh materialov, otnosia-shchiakhsia k istorii revoliutsionnykh i oppozitsionnykh dvizhenii v Rossii*. 3 volumes. St Petersburg and Paris, 1905–6.

Bialoveskii, A. 'Iz proshlago'. *Byloe*, 8 (1906): 193–207.

Bibergal', A. N. 'Vospominaniia o demonstratsii na Kazanskoi ploschadi'. *KS*, 28–29 (1926): 21–29.

Bodaev, V. A. 'N. M. Flerov i "podgotovitel'naia gruppa partii Narodnoi Voli"'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 2: 15–23.

Borziakov, G. 'Revoliutsionnaia molodezh' v Odesse v 1882–1884 gg'. *KS*, 57–58 (1929): 129–58.

Braginskii, M. A. 'Iz vospominanii o voenno-revoliutsionnoi organizatsii (1884–1886 g.g.)'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 2: 113–27.

Braginskii, M. A. and Tereshkovich, K. M., eds. *Iakutskaiia Tragediia. Sbornik vospominaniia i materialov*. Moscow, 1925.

Bramson, M. V. 'Iakutskaiia tragediia (1889 g.–1924 g.)'. In *Iakutskaiia tragediia*, 7–28. Edited by M. A. Braginskii and K. M. Tereshkovich.

- 'Otryvki iz vospominanii (1877–1886)'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 1 (1928): 81–6.
- Broido, E. [L'vovna] *Memoirs of a Revolutionary*. Translated and edited by Vera Broido. London, 1967.
- Bukh, N. K. 'Pervaia tipografiia "Narodnoi Voli"'. *KS*, 57–58 (1929): 54–93.
- 'Pervyi protsess narodovol'tsev', *KS*, 80 (1931): 108–41.
- Bukhbinder, N. A. 'Iz istorii revoliutsionnoi propagandy sredi evreev v Rossii v 70-kh gg'. In *IRS*, 1 (1924): 37–66.
- 'K protsessu I. M. Koval'skogo'. *KS*, 38 (1928): 67–73.
- 'Minskaia tipografiia "Chernogo peredela"', *KS*, 35 (1927): 92–99.
- Bulanova, O. K. "'Chernyi Peredel" (vospominaniia)'. *Gruppa*, 1 (1924): 112–22.
- Bulanova-Trubnikova, O. K. 'Stranichki vospominanii'. *Byloe*, 24 (1924): 47–95.
- Cahan, A. *The White Terror and the Red. A Novel of Revolutionary Russia*. New York, 1905 (reprint, New York, 1970).
- [Cahan, A.] *The Education of Abraham Cahan*. Philadelphia, 1969.
- Chaikovskii, N. V. 'Cherez pol stoletii', *Golos minuvshogo na chuzhnoi storone*, 16: 3 (1926): 179–95.
- [Chaikovskii, N. V.] 'Pis'mo iz Peterburga'. *Vpered!*, 3 (1874): 147–53.
- Charushin, N. A. *Detstvo i v gimnazii. Kruzhok chaikovtsev. Iz vospominanii o revoliutsionnom dvizhenii 1870-kh gg.* (Added title reads *O dalekom proshlom*, part 1 and 2). Moscow, 1926.
- Chernavskii, M. M. 'Aleksandr Nikolaevich Bibergal'. *KS*, 22 (1926): 213–17.
- 'Demonstratsiia 6 dekabria 1876 goda. Po vospominaniiam uchastnika'. *KS*, 28–29 (1926): 7–20.
- Chernov, V. *Yidishe tuer in der partay sotsialistn revoliutsionern. Biografishe eseyen*. New York, 1948.
- Chernyi peredel. Organ sotsialistov-federalistov, 1880–1881 g. Pamiatniki agitatsionnoi literatury*. vol. I. With an introductory article by O. V. Aptekman. Moscow–Petrograd, 1923.
- Chudnovskii, S. L. *Iz dal'nikh let. Vospominaniia*. Edited by M. A. Braginskii. Moscow, 1934.
- 'Iz dal'nikh let (otryvki iz vospominanii)'. *Byloe*, 9 and 10 (1907): 273–95, and 218–40.
- Debogory-Mokriewitsch, W. *Erinnerungen eines Nihilisten*. Translated by Dr H. Roehl. Stuttgart, 1905.
- 'Degaevshchina. (Materialy i dokumenty)'. *Byloe*, 4 (1906): 18–38.
- Deich, L. G. 'Aaron Zundelevich'. *Di tsukunft*, 19 (August 1914): 831–39.
- 'Aaron Zundelevich (odin iz pervykh sotsial-demokratov Rossii)'. *Gruppa*, 2 (1924): 185–216.
- 'Chernyi peredel. S predisloviiem V. Nevskogo'. In *IRS*, 2 (1924): 267–317.
- 'Der ershter revoliutsioner—"tsionist"'. *Di tsukunft*, 21 (September 1916): 777–81.
- 'Der letster yidisher anteylnemer in der ermordung fun rusishen tsar'. *Di tsukunft*, 21 (July 1916): 614–19.
- 'Di ershte yiden-terroristen'. *Di tsukunft*, 20 (December 1915): 1121–25.
- 'Di tragedie fun Grigori Goldenberg'. *Di tsukunft*, 21 (January 1916): 69–73.
- G. V. *Plekhanov. Materialy dlia biografii*. Moscow, 1922.

- 'G. V. Plekhanov v "Zemle i vole"'. *Gruppa*, 3 (1925): 44–67.
- 'Gesia Helfman, di groyse stile martirerin'. *Di tsukunft*, 21 (April 1916): 322–35.
- 'Ia.V. Stefanovich sredi narodovol'tsev (vospominaniia)'. *Gruppa*, 3 (1925): 96–121.
- 'Leizer Tsukerman – der beliebtester yid in der revolutsie'. *Di tsukunft*, 21 (March 1916): 240–45.
- 'Lev Zlatopolski – di tragedie fun a yidishen goan oyf katorge'. *Di tsukunft*, 21 (May 1916): 407–13.
- 'Na rubezhe'. *Vestnik Evropy*, 47 (July 1912): 155–83.
- 'Na sud chitatelia. (Pis'mo v redaktsiiu)'. *Sovremennyi mir*, 12 (1913): 274–83.
- 'Nevinno poveshennye'. *Evreiskaia letopis'*, 4 (Leningrad, 1926): 134–36.
- 'Oproverzhenie ili otstuplenie?' *Iskra*, 29 (December 1, 1902): 2–3.
- 'Pervye shagi gruppy "Osvobozhdenie Truda"'. *Gruppa*, 1 (1923): 9–49.
- 'Pis'mo v redaktsiiu'. *Obshchina*, 8–9 (1878): 16–17.
- 'Poluvekovye godovshchiny'. *Gruppa*, 4 (1926): 53–80.
- Provokatory i terror. Po lichnym vospominaniiam*. Tula, 1926.
- Review of O. V. Aptekman. *Obshchestvo 'Zemlia i Volia' 70-kh gg.* *KS*, 10 (1924): 284–89.
- Rol' evreev v russkom revoliutsionnom dvizhenii*. Berlin, 1923.
- 'Saveli Zlatopolski'. *Di tsukunft*, 21 (June 1916): 511–14.
- 'Smert' Aarona Zundeleovicha'. *KS*, 8 (1924): 213–18.
- 'Unshuldig gehangene – L. Maidanski; Sh. Rozovski'. *Di tsukunft*, 21 (February 1916): 158–60.
- 'Valer'ian Osinskii (k 50-letiiu ego kazni)', *KS*, 54 (1929): 7–42.
- Za polveka*. 2 vols. Berlin, 1923, II, separately titled: *Za Polveka. Torzhestvo bakunizma v Rossii*. (Republished by Oriental Research Partners, 1975, with an introduction by Ezra Mendelsohn.)
- Za polveka*. I: 1. Moscow, 1922. This is a separately published volume of the first part of Deich's two-volume work of memoirs by the same title.
- 'Za rubezhom'. *Vestnik Evropy*, 47 (September 1912): 167–91.
- Deutsch, L. *Sixteen Years in Siberia. Some Experiences of a Russian Revolutionist*. Translated by Helen Chisholm. London, 1903 (reprint, Connecticut, 1977).
- Deniker, I. E. 'Vospominaniia. S predisloviem i primechaniiami Sh. M. Levina'. *KS*, 11 (1924): 20–43.
- Denisenko, V. P. 'Khar'kovskaia gruppa partii "Narodnoi Voli" 1885–1887 g.g.'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 2 (1929): 128–42.
- Dimanshtein, S. ed. *Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie sredi evreev*. Moscow, 1930.
- 'Doklad III ekspeditsii III otd. S. E. V. Kants. po obvineniiu 38 zhitelei severo-zapadnogo kraia v prestupnoi propagande'. In N. A. Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii revoliutsionnoi propagandy sredi evreev v Rossii', *IRS*, 1: 51–58.
- 'Dokladnaia zapiska vilenskogo politsiimeistera podpolkovnika lasovskogo ot 28 apr. 1880 g.'. In N. A. Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii revoliutsionnoi propagandy sredi evreev v Rossii', *IRS*, 1: 61–66.
- 'Dokumenty k chigirinskomu delu'. *Byloe*, 12 (1906): 257–61.
- Drezen, A. 'Matrosy v revoliutsionnom dvizhenii 70-kh godov'. *KS*, 31 (1927): 60–80.

- [Drigo, V. V.]. 'K biografii D. A. Lizoguba. (Zapiski V. V. Drigo)'. *KS*, 53 (1929): 93–103.
- Engel, B. A. and Rosenthal, C. N., ed. *Five Sisters: Women Against the Tsar*. New York: 1975.
- Engel'meier, A. K. 'Kazn' Mlodetskogo', *Golos minuvshogo*, 7–8 (1917): 184–92.
- Erz. [A. V. Rabinovich]. 'Die Entwicklung des sozialistischen Gedankens in der hebräischen Presse Osteuropas', *JSS*, II (Zurich, 1881): 356–65.
- Field, D. *Rebels in the Name of the Tsar*. Boston, 1976.
- Figner, V. N. 'Mark Andreevich Natanson'. *KS*, 56 (1929): 141–50.
- Nacht über Russland. Lebenserinnerungen von Wera Figner*. Berlin, 1928.
- 'Polnoe sobranie sochinenii' v semi tomakh. 7 vols. Moscow, 1932.
- [Figner, V. N.]. 'Iz avtobiografii Very Figner'. *Byloe*, 2, 3, 4 (1917): 153–82, 166–91, 57–89.
- Flerovskii, N. [V. V. Bervi]. *Tri politicheskiia sistemy. Nikolai I, Aleksandr II i Aleksandr III. Vospominaniia*. London, 1897.
- Freifel'd, L. V. 'Iz zhizni narodovol'cheskikh organizatsii kontsa 80-kh godov'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 2 (1929): 143–56.
- 'Svetloi pamiati S. M. Ginsburg', *KS*, 12 (1924): 259–71.
- Friedenberg, A. 'Revoliutsionnaia Odessa v kontse 1870-kh gg'. *Byloe*, 31 (1925): 84–91.
- Frolenko, M. F. 'A. I. Zundeleovich'. *KS*, 8 (1924): 219–21.
- 'O Goldenberge'. *KS*, 57 (1929): 279–82.
- Sobranie sochinenii*. 2 vols. Moscow, 1930–31.
- Frumkin, B. 'Iz istorii revoliutsionnago dvizheniia sredi evreev v 1870-kh godakh'. *Evreiskaia starina*, 1 (January–March 1911): 221–48 and 513–40.
- 'G. M. Fridenson'. (Obituary). *Golos minuvshogo*, 7 (1913): 282–4.
- Gekker, N. L. 'Revoliutsionnyi kruzhok v Berdianske'. *KS*, 11 (1924): 100–10.
- Gessen, Iu. 'Ravvinskaia uchilishcha v Rossii'. *Evreiskaia entsiklopediia*, 13: 257–63.
- Getsov, I. 'Tipografiia "Chernogo peredela". Vospominaniia naborshchika'. *Gruppa*, 1 (1924): 123–32.
- [Gol'denberg, G. D.]. 'K obshchestvu', *Zemlia i Volia*, 4 (20 February 1879). In *Revoliutsionnaia zhurnalistika semidesiatiykh godov* (Paris, 1905), 226–28. Edited by V. Ia. Iakovlev.
- Gol'denberg, L. B. 'Vospominaniia. S vstupitel'noi stat'ei E. N. Koval'skoi (Solutsevoi) "Moi vstrechi s Lazarem Gol'denbergom"'. *KS*, 10 (1924): 89–105; 11 (1924): 44–56; 12 (1924): 106–20; and 13 (1924): 121–26.
- Gots, M. R. 'S. V. Zubatov. (Stranichka iz perezhitaiu)'. *Byloe*, 9 (1906): 63–8.
- Grinberg-Kon, Kh. G. 'Episod iz zhizni narodovol'tsev'. *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 7 (1922): 241–3.
- [Grinberg, Kh. G.]. 'Rech' Kh. G. Grinberg'. In 'Rechi podsudimyykh v protsesse 17-ti'. *Byloe*, 12 (1906): 236–48.
- Gruppa 'Osvobozhdenie truda'*. (Iz arkhivov G. V. Plekhanova, V. I. Zasulich i L. G. Deicha). 6 vols. Edited by L. G. Deich. Moscow, 1923–28.
- Gudzii, N. 'Rasskaz o kazni Lozinskogo i Rozovskogo v "Voskresenii" Tolstogo i ego istochnik', *KS*, 93–94 (1932): 62–83.
- Gurevich, G. E. 'Di iugent fun Pavel Akselrod', in *Naye tsayt*, 83 (171), 14 May 1918.

- 'Korolenko i Leizer Tsukerman'. *KS*, 47 (1928): 84–5.
- 'Pervyi protsess "nigilistov" v Berline'. *Byloe*, 9/21 (September 1907): 77–82.
- 'Protsess evreiskikh sotsialistov v Berline'. *Evreiskaia starina*, 10 (1918): 151–74.
- 'Sredi revoliutsionerov v Tsiurikhe'. *Evreiskaia letopis'*, 4 (1926): 98–103.
- 'Zapiski otshchepentsa'. *Voskhod*, 4 (1884) 3: 1–26; 5: 1–22; 6: 86–99.
- 'Zikhroynes (1873–1880)'. In *HS*, 3 (1939): 224–55.
- 'Tsu der biografie fun L. Tsukerman (zikhroynes)'. *Royter pinkos*, 2 (Warsaw, 1924): 112–18.
- Gurvich, E. A. 'Evreiskoe rabochee dvizhenie v Minske v 80-kh godakh'. In Dimanshtein, *Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie sredi evreev*, 33–64.
- Gurvich, I. 'Pervye evreiskie rabochie kruzhki'. *Byloe*, 6/18 (July 1907): 65–77.
- Historische shriftn.* 3 vols. Edited by E. Tscherikower et al. Warsaw–Vilna: 1929–39.
- Hourwich, I. A. [Gurvich]. 'Zikhroynes fun an apikuros'. *Freye arbeyter shtime*, New York, 1921–24 (nos. 1130–1270).
- Hurvits, Zh. 'Di ershte propagandistishe kraizn'. *Royte bleter*, 1 (Minsk, 1929): 1–5.
- Iakimova, A. V. 'Gruppa "Svoboda ili smert"''. *KS*, 24 (1926): 14–6.
- 'Protsess shestnadsati terroristov – pervyi narodovol'cheskii protsess'. In Iakimova-Dikovskaia, *'Narodnaia volia' pered tsarskim sudom*, 1 (1930): 17–54.
- Iakimova-Dikovskaia, A. V., Frolenko, A. V., Drei, M. I., et al. *'Narodnaia volia' pered tsarskim sudom*. 2 vols. Moscow, 1930–31.
- [Iakovlev, M.] 'Zakliuchenie iuriskonsul'ta III otd. po delu o 38 litsakh'. In N. A. Bukhbinder, *'Iz istorii revoliutsionnoi propagandy sredi evreev v Rossii'*. *IRS*, 1 (1924): 58–61.
- Iakovlev, V. Ia. [Bogucharskii, B.] ed. *Revoliutsionnaia zhurnalistika semi-desiatykh godov*. Paris, 1905 (Russkaia istoricheskaya biblioteka, 7); reprint ed, Düsseldorf: Brückner Verlag, 1970.
- Iakubovich, D. 'R. F. Iakubovich-Frank'. In Braginskii, *Iakutskaya tragediia*, 171–84.
- Iasinskii, I. *Roman moei zhizni*. Moscow–Leningrad, 1926.
- Il'iashevich [Rubanovich], I. 'Chto delat' evreiam v Rossii? (Vместo predisloviia)', *Vestnik narodnoi voli*, 5 (1886): 83–126.
- Iokhel'son, V. I. 'Dalekoe proshloe. Iz vospominanii starogo narodnovol'tsa'. *Byloe*, 13 (1918): 53–75.
- 'Iz perepiski s P. L. Lavrovym'. *Byloe*, 21 (1923): 147–55.
- Pervye dni Narodnoi Voli*. Peterburg, 1922.
- Iokhel'son, V. I. and Kantor, R. M. *Gesia Gelfman. Materialy dlia biografii i kharakteristiki*. Petrograd–Moscow, 1922.
- Istoriko-revoliutsionnyi sbornik*. 3 vols., V. I. Nevskii. Moscow–Leningrad, 1924–26.
- Itenberg, B. S. and Volk, S. S. eds. *Revoliutsionnoe narodnichestvo 70-kh godov XIX veka*. 2 vols. Moscow, 1964–65.
- Ivanova-Boreisha, S. A. 'Pervaia tipografiia "Narodnoi Voli"''. *Byloe*, 9 (1906): 1–11.

- Ivanovskaia, P. S. 'Pervye tipografii "Narodnoi Voli"'. *KS*, 24 (1926): 32–57.
- 'Iz Elizavetgradskago uezda'. *Chernyi Peredel*, 5 (December 1881). In *Chernyi Peredel*, 345–49.
- 'Iz istorii narodovol'cheskogo dvizheniia sredi voennykh v nachala 80-kh godov'. *Byloe*, 8 (1906): 158–92.
- 'K statistike gosudarstvennykh prestuplenii v Rossii'. *Narodnaia Volia*, 4 (1880) and 5 (1881). In *Literatura sotsial'no-revoliutsionnoi partii "Narodnoi Voli"*, 315–22, 344–56.
- Kagan, M. 'J. L. Davidovich'. *Evreiskaia starina*, 2 (April–June, 1911): 409–12.
- Kantor, R. M. 'O Derptskei narodovol'cheskoi tipografii'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 2 (1929): 95–104.
- Kantor, R. M. 'Aleksandr III o evreiskikh pogromakh 1881–83 gg. (Novye materialy)'. *Evreiskaia letopis'*, 1 (Leningrad, 1923).
- Gesia Gelfman*. Moscow, 1926.
- "'Ispoved'" Grigorii Gol'denberga'. *KA*, 30 (1928): 117–83.
- Kantor, R. M. ed. 'Dva pis'ma G. Goldenberga iz Trubetskogo bastiona'. *KS*, 13 (1924): 139–47.
- Kaufman, A. E. 'Za mnogo let', *Evreiskaia starina*, 6 (1913), 201–20.
- Kisman, J. 'A kapitl geshikhte fun der yidisher arbeter-bavegung in rumenie'. *HS*, 3 (1939): 447–53.
- Koff, G. M. 'K delu o pervom vooruzhennom soprotivlenii v Odesse v 1878 g. (Materialy k delu I. M. Koval'skogo)'. *KS*, 45–46 (1928): 100–9.
- Kogan, Z. 'Tul'skaia tipografia partii "Narodnoi Voli"'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 2: 105–112.
- Kogan-Bernshtein, N. 'Panni Pavlovich Podbel'skii'. In Braginskii, *Iakutskaia tragediia*, 108–16.
- Kon, F. 'Moi pervye vstrechi s evreiskimi rabochimi'. In Dimanshtein, *Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie sredi evreev*, 21–32.
- Kon, P. 'Dos tsveyte revolutsionere krayzl in vilne 1876 un zayn likvidatsie (loyt arkhiv-materialn un zikhroynes)'. In *HS*, 3 (1939): 256–82.
- 'Nayes vegn di ershte yidishe revolutsionern-publitsistn'. *Bikher velt*, 9 (1928): 23–9.
- 'Razgrom pervogo evreiskogo revolutsionnogo kruzhka v Vil'ne v 1875'. In *Evreiskii vestnik* (Leningrad, 1928), 143–54.
- 'Vegn yidishn revolutsionern krayzl in vilne fun yor 1876'. *Literarishe Bleter*, 23 (318) (Warsaw, 1930): 431.
- Kornilova-Moroz, A. *Perovskaia i kruzhok chaikovtsev*. Moscow, 1929.
- 'Perovskaia i osnovanie kruzhka chaikovtsev'. *KS*, 22 (1926): 7–30.
- Korolenko, V. G. *Istoriia moego sovremennika*. 5 vols. Moscow–Berlin, 1922.
- Kovalik, S. F. 'Dvizhenie semidesiatykh godov po bol'shomu protsessu (193-kh)'. *Byloe*, 10, 11, 12 (1906): 1–30, 30–72, 56–81.
- Koval'skaia, E. N. *Iuzhno-russkii rabochii soiuz, 1880–81*. Moscow, 1926.
- 'Iz moikh vospominanii. (K stat'e A. I. Kornilovoi)'. *KS*, 22 (1926): 31–4.
- 'Moi vstrechi s S. L. Perovskoi'. *Byloe*, 16 (1921): 41–8.
- 'Pervaia tipografia "Chernogo Peredela"'. *KS*, 50 (1928): 61–3.
- 'Po povodu pis'ma V. Maliutina (K stat'e Ia.D. Baumana [sic] "K istorii khar'kovskikh revolutsionnykh kruzhkov"'. *KS*, 77 (1931): 135–42.
- Koz'min, B. P. *Nechaev i nechaevtsy. Sbornik materialov*. Moscow, 1931.

- Kraft, 'Iz vospominanii ob I. M. Koval'skom'. *KS*, 38 (1928): 75-9.
- Krol', M. A. 'Vospominaniia o I.Ia. Shternberge'. *KS*, 58-59 (1929), 214-24.
- Kropotkin, P. A. *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*. Edited by J. A. Rogers. Gloucester, MA., 1967.
- Krotov, M. A. *Iakutskaia ssylka 70-80-kh godov. Istoricheskii ocherk po neizdannym arkhivnym materialam*. Moscow, 1925.
- Kulakov, A. A. 'Avtobiografia'. *KS*, 64 (1930): 164-80.
- 'Narodnaia Volia' na iuge v polovine 80-kh gg'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 1 (1928): 140-44.
- 'O trekh predateliakh. (El'ko, Ostroumov, Geier)'. *KS*, 67 (1930): 79-88.
- Kuleshova, N. F. V. G. *Tan-Bogoraz: Zhizn' i tvorchestvo*. Minsk, 1975.
- Kuliabko-Koretskii, N. G. *Iz dal'nikh let. Vospominaniia lavrista*. Moscow, 1931.
- Kurbatova, I. N. and Arkushenko, T. A. eds. *Ot narodnichestva - k marksizmu: Vospominaniia uchastnikov revoliutsionnogo dvizheniia v Peterburge (1883-1894 gg.)*. Leningrad, 1987.
- Kurski, F. 'Der onhoib. Etlekhe bamerkungen tsu a groyser teme'. *Folkstsaytung*, 356 (Warsaw), 16 December 1932: 9.
- Kuz'min, D. [E. Kolosov]. 'Kazanskaia demonstratsiia 1876 i Plekhanov'. *KS*, 42 (1928): 7-40.
- Kuznetsov, L. 'K istorii "Narodnoi voli". (Zapiska A. N. Bakha 1886 g.)'. *KS*, 67 (1930): 54-9.
- Lavrov, P. L. *Historical Letters*. Translated, with an introduction and notes, by J. P. Scanlan. Berkeley, 1967.
- Narodniki-propagandisty, 1873-1878 godov*. St Petersburg, 1907.
- [Lavrov, P.]. 'Nasha programma'. *Vpered!*, 1 (1873): 12-23.
- Lebeovich, G. 'K biografii Ia. M. Kalmansona'. *KS*, 13 (1924): 223-7.
- Levental', N. *Nakanune khozhdeniia v narod*. Moscow, 1927.
- 'Semen Lur'e'. *KS*, 38 (1928): 123-27.
- Levin, Sh.M. 'Dve demonstratsii. (Iz istorii revoliutsionnoi situatsii kontsa 70-kh godov XIX v.)'. *Istoricheskie zapiski*, 54 (1955): 251-70.
- Lezitskii, V. '"Narodnaia Volia" i rabochii klass'. *KS*, kn. 62 (1930): 48-66.
- [Liberman, A.]. *Arn Liberman briv (Letters of Aaron Liberman)*. Edited by Kalman Marmor, with introduction and notes. New York, 1951.
- 'Evreiskoi intelligentsnoi molodezhi'. *Vpered!*, 38 (1 August 1876): 474-5.
- 'Iz Belostoka'. *Vpered!*, 18, 19 (1, 15 October 1875): 559-63, 598-602; 20 (1 November 1875): 623-26; 23, 24 (15, 31 December 1875): 721-26, 753-55; and 26, 27 (1, 15 February 1876): 49-52, 81-85.
- 'Iz Vil'no'. *Vpered!*, 16, 21 (1 September, 15 November 1875): 503-7, 659-63; 32 (1 May 1876): 254-55; 35, 37 (15 June and 15 July 1876): 367-69, 447-48.
- 'Kosvennyi produkt pravitel'svennoi paniki'. *Vpered!*, 18 (October 1, 1875): 563-66.
- 'Ob organizatsii sotsial'no-revoliutsionnogo soiuza mezhdru evreiami v Rossii'. In N. A. Bukhbinder, 'Iz istorii revoliutsionnoi propagandy sredi evreev v Rossii', *IRS*, 1 (1924): 44-51.
- Linden, A. [Leo Motzkin]. 'Prototype des Pogroms in den achtziger Jahren'. In *Die Judenpogrome in Russland*, 12-96. Edited by Zionistische Hilfsfonds in London. Cologne, 1909.

- Lion, S. E. 'Ot propagandy k terroru. (Iz odesskikh vospominanii semidesiatnika)'. *KS*, 12, 13 (1924): 9–24.
- 'Pervaia vooruzhennaia demonstratsiia. (Po lichnym vospominaniia i arkhivnym materialam)'. *KS*, 45–46 (1928): 64–80.
- Literatura sotsial'no-revoliutsionnoi partii 'Narodnoi Voli'*. Edited by V. Ia. Iakovlev. N.p.: Tipografia Partii sotsialistov-revoliutsionnerov, 1905.
- Litvak, A. [C. Y. Helfland]. 'Aaron Zundevich'. *Royter pinkos*, 2 (Warsaw, 1924): 80–106.
- Vos geven: etiudn un zikhroynes*. Vilna, 1925.
- Liubatovich, O. S. 'Dalekoe i nedavnee'. *Byloe*, 5 (May 1906): 208–47; 6 (June 1906): 108–56.
- [Liubatovich, O. S.]. 'Betia Kaminskaia [Obituary]'. *Obshchina*, nos. 8–9 (1878): 7–9.
- Lukashevich, A. O. 'V narod!'. *Byloe*, 15 (March 1907): 1–44.
- Makletsova, N. P. [Degaeva]. 'Sudeikin i Degaev'. *Byloe*, 8 (1906): 265–72.
- Martynovskaia, Ts. 'I. M. Koval'skii i pervoe vooruzhennoe soprotivlenie v Odesse. (Po chernovym nabroskam S. I. Martynovskogo)'. *KS*, 45–46 (1928): 81–99.
- Meer, O. 'Pamiati otoshedshikh'. In Dimanshtein, *Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie sredi evreev*, 282–6.
- Menes, A. 'Di yidishe arbeter-bavegung in rusland fun onhoib 70er bizn suf 90er yorn'. In *HS*, 3 (1939): 1–59.
- Meyzil, N. 'Leizer Tsukerman'. *Royter pinkos*, 1 (Warsaw, 1921): 92–112.
- [Mikhailov, A. D.]. 'Aleksandr Dmitrievich Mikhailov. (Materialy dlia biografii)'. *Byloe*, 2 (1906): 156–74.
- Pis'ma narodovol'tsa A. D. Mikhailova*. Compiled by P. E. Shchegolev. Moscow, 1933.
- Minor, O. S. 'Iakutskaia drama 22-go marta 1889 goda'. *Byloe*, 9 (September 1906): 129–48.
- Moreinis, M. A. 'Solomon Iakovlevich Vittenberg i protsess 28-mi'. *KS*, 56 (1929): 47–67.
- Morozov, N. A. *Povesti moei zhizni. Memuary*. 2 vols. Moscow, 1962.
- [Morozov, N. A.]. 'Ocherk istorii kruzhka chaikovtsev'. In B. S. Itenberg, ed. *Revoliutsionnoe narodnichestvo 70-kh godov XIX veka*, I (1964): 202–40.
- Narodovol'tsy. Sbornik statei i materialov, sostavlennyi uchastnikami narodovoi chesкого dvizheniia*. 3 vols. Edited by A. V. Iakimova-Dikovskaia, M. F. Frolenko, I. I. Popov, et al. Moscow, 1928–31.
- N[ikolaev]skii, B. Review of *Zapiski narodovol'tsa* by A. N. Bakh. *KS*, 59 (1929): 216–17.
- N[ovopol]in, G. 'Iz zhizni rabochikh narodovol'cheskikh kruzhkov. (Pamiati Andreia Karpenko)'. *KS*, 57–58 (1929): 203–13.
- 'O zadach[akh] deiatel'n[osti] partii v narode'. *Narodnaia Volia*, 10 (September 1884). In *Literatura sotsial'no-revoliutsionnoi partii 'Narodnoi Voli'*, 664–75.
- Odinets, D. M. 'V kruzhke "chaikovtsev"'. In Titov, ed. *Nikolai Vasil'evich Chaikovskii*, 39–97.
- Orzhikh, B. D. 'V riadakh "Narodnoi Voli"'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 3: 75–172.
- Osmolovskii, G. 'Kariitsy. (Materialy dlia statistiki russkago revolutsionnago dvizheniia)'. *Minuvshie gody*, 7 (1908): 119–55.
- Panteleev, L. F. *Iz vospominanii proshlogo*. St. Petersburg, 1905.

- Perepiska G. V. Plekhanova i P. B. Aksel'roda*. Edited and annotated by P. A. Berlin, V. S. Voitinskii, and B. I. Nikolaevskii. Moscow, 1925.
- Perovskii, V. 'Moi vospominaniia'. *KS*, 16, 17 (1925): 7-23, 63-79.
- Peshekerov, P. K. 'Propaganda narodovol'tsev sredi rabochikh v Rostove-na-Donu v 1882-1884 gg'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 1 (1928): 116-28.
- Peskin, J. 'Di "grupe yidishe sotsial-demokratn in rusland" un Arkadi Kremer'. In *HS*, 3 (1939): 544-56.
- 'Pis'ma L. G. Deicha k Pavlu Borisovichu Aksel'rodu (v nachale 80-kh g.g.)'. *Gruppa*, 1 (1925): 148-99.
- 'Pis'ma osuzhdennykh Iakutian'. *Byloe*, 9 (1906): 149-57.
- 'Pis'mo s iuga'. In *Chernyi Peredel*, 303-7.
- Plekhanov, G. V. 'Neudachnaia istoriia partii "Narodnoi Voli"'. In Plekhanov, *Sochineniia*, 24 (1927): 131-60.
- 'O bylom i nebylitsakh. (Iz literaturnogo nasledstva G. V. Plekhanova s dopolneniiami L. Deicha)'. In Plekhanov, *Sochineniia*, 24: 299-312.
- 'O sotsial'noi demokratii v Rossii'. In Plekhanov, *Sochineniia*, 9 (1925): 5-29.
- 'Predislovie k russkomu izdaniiu knigi A. Tuna "Istoriia revoliutsionnykh dvizhenii v Rossii"'. In Plekhanov, *Sochineniia*, 24: 81-124.
- 'Russkii rabochii v revoliutsionnom dvizhenii. (Po lichnym vospominaniiam)'. In Plekhanov, *Sochineniia*, 3 (1925): 121-205.
- Sochineniia*, 24 vols. 2nd edn. Edited by D. Riazanov. Moscow, 1923-27.
- Plekhanova, R. M. 'Periferiinyi kruzhok "Zemli i Voli"'. *Gruppa* 4 (1926): 81-116.
- Poliakov, M. M. 'Razгром Ekaterinoslavskoi narodovol'cheskoi gruppy v 1886 g'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 1 (1928): 145-50.
- Popov, I. I. 'Revoliutsionnye organizatsii v Peterburge 1882-85 g.g'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 1: 49-80.
- Popov, I. I. and Meer, O. S. 'Pamiati L. S. Zalkinda'. *KS*, 60 (1929): 173-77.
- Popov, M. R. 'Iz moego revoliutsionnago proshlago'. *Byloe*, 17 (May 1907): 269-305; 19 (July 107): 240-77.
- Zapiski zemlevo'tsa*. Moscow, 1933.
- Pribylev, A. V. *Zapiski narodovol'tsa*. Moscow, 1930.
- Pribyleva, A. P. and Figner, V. N. *Narodovolets Aleksandr Dmitrievich Mikhailov*. Leningrad, 1925.
- Pribyleva-Korba, A. P. 'Narodnaia Volia'. *Vospominaniia o 1870-1880-kh g.g.* Moscow, 1926.
- Rakitnikov, N. I. '"Narodnaia Volia" v russkom revoliutsionnom dvizhenii'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 1: 9-25.
- Rappaport, C. 'The Life of a Revolutionary Emigre. (Reminiscences)'. *YIVO Annual*, 6 (1951): 206-36.
- [Romanenko, G. G.]. 'Vnutrennee obozrenie'. *Narodnaia Volia*, 6 (23 October 1881). In *Literatura sotsial'no-revoliutsionnoi partii "Narodnoi Voli"*, 419-39.
- 'Rukopis': '"Po pobodu sobraniia russkoi narodnoi partii 6 dekabria 1876 goda"'. In *IRS*, 3 (1926): 107-17.
- [Rusanov, N. S.]. *Biografiia Petra Lavrovicha*. N.p., 1899.
- Sapir, B. 'Liberman et le socialisme russe'. *IRSH*, 3 (1938): 25-88.
- On the History of 'Vpered'*. Translated by Brian Pearce. In Sapir, ed.

- '*Vpered!*' 1873–1877: *materialy iz arkhiva Valeriana Nikolaevicha Smirnova*, I Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1970. (This volume consists of both the original Russian version, *Ocherk istorii 'Vpered'*, and its English translation).
- Sapir, B., ed. *Lavrov – gody emigratsii: arkhivnye materialy v dvukh tomakh*. 2 vols. Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1974. I: *Lavrov i Lopatin (perepiska 1870–1883)*; II: *Ot 'Vpered!' k gruppe starykh narodovol'tsev*.
- '*Vpered!*' 1873–1877: *materialy iz arkhiva Valeriana Nikolaevicha Smirnova*. 2 vols. Dordrecht-Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1970. I: *Ocherk istorii 'Vpered'*, by Boris Sapir. II: *Dokumenty*.
- Saratovets [Mainov, I. I.]. 'Na zakate narodovol'chestva. (Pamiati V.Ia. Bogucharskago)'. *Byloe*, 5–6 (November–December 1917): 41–81.
- Semenov, A. 'Solomon Vittenberg. (Materialy k biografii)'. *Byloe*, 6/34 (1925): 58–74.
- Shavrov, K. B. 'V. I. Iokhel'son'. *Sovetskaia etnografiia*, 2 (Leningrad, 1935): 3–15.
- Shebalin, M. P. *Klochki vospominanii*. Moscow, 1935.
- Shebeko, N. I. *Khronika sotsialisticheskogo dvizheniia v Rossii, 1878–1887. Offitsial'nyi otchet*. Moscow, 1906. Originally this volume was published in French in 1900 under the title *La Chronique du mouvement socialiste en Russie*.
- Shekhter, A. N. 'Revoliutsionnaia Odessa 1877–1878 gg. (K kharakteristike Liona i Fomicheva)'. *KS*, 6 (1923): 44–52.
- Shekhter-Minor, A. 'Iuzhno-russkaia narodovol'cheskaia organizatsiia'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 1 (1928): 131–39.
- Shishko, L. E. *Sergei Mikhailovich Kravchinskii i kruzhok chaikovtsev (Iz vospominanii i zametok starogo narodnika)*. St Petersburg, 1906.
- [Shiriaev, S.]. 'Avtobiograficheskaja zapiska S. Shiriaeva'. *KA*, 7 (1924): 70–107.
- Shternberg, L. 'Pamiati L'va Matveevicha Kogana-Bernshteina'. In Braginskii, *Iakutskaia tragediia*, 100–4.
- [Shternberg, L.Ia.]. 'Politicheskii terror v Rossii 1884'. In Sapir, *Lavrov–gody emigratsii*, 2: 572–94.
- Shub, D. 'Aaron Zundeleovich'. In *Vilne. A zamlbukh gevidmet der shtot Vilne*, 96–126. Edited by E. H. Jeshurin. New York, 1935.
- Shur, K. *Vospominaniia*. Kursk, 1928.
- Sidorov, N. I. 'Grigorii Gol'denberg v Petropavlovskoi kreposti'. *KA*, 10 (1925): 328–31.
- 'Statisticheskie svedeniia o propagandistakh 70-kh godov v obrabotke III otdeleniia'. *KS*, 38 (1928): 27–56.
- Stepniak [Kravchinskii, S. M.]. *Podpol'naia Rossiia*. London, 1893. *The Career of a Nihilist. A Novel*. London, 1890.
- Underground Russia. Revolutionary Profiles and Sketches from Life*. Translated from the Italian. Preface by Peter Lavroff. New York, 1883.
- Sukhomlin V. I. 'Iz epokhi upadka partii "Narodnaia Volia"'. *KS*, 24, 25, 27, 28–29 (1926): 75–89, 29–45, 65–87, 61–103 respectively.

- 'Svod pokazanii dannykh nekotorymi iz arestovannykh po delom v gosudarstvennykh prestupleniiakh'. *Byloe*, 18, 19, 20 (1907): 118–63, 141–68, 88–123 respectively.
- Tan[-Bogoraz], N. 'Povesti proshloi zhizni'. *Russkoe bogatstvo*, 9 and 10 (1907): 107–31, 150–64.
- Tan-Bogoraz, V. G. [N. M. Bogoraz]. 'Praskov'ia Fedorovna Bogoraz'. In Shebalin, *Klochki vospominanii*, 228–34.
- Tereshkovich, K. M. 'Neskol'ko slov po povodu vospominanii M. R. Gotsa'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 1 (1928): 109–115.
- 'The Jews in Russia'. *The Times* (London), 5 and 16 March 1880.
- [Tikhomirov, L. A.]. '*Vospominaniia*' *L'va Tikhomirova*. With a foreword by V. I. Nevskii, and an introduction by V. N. Figner. Moscow–Leningrad, 1927.
- Titov, A. A. ed. *Nikolai Vasil'evich Chaikovskii. Religioznyia i obshchestvennyia iskaniiia*. Paris, 1929.
- Trigoni, M. N. 'Iz vospominanii ob Alekseevskom raveline'. *Minuvshie gody*, 4 (April 1908): 56–68.
- Tscherikower, E. 'Der onhoyb fun der yidisher sotsialistisher bavegung (Libermans tkufe)'. In *HS*, 1 (1929): 469–532.
- Tscher[ikower], E. 'Fun di politsay-arkhivn in tsarishn rusland'. *HS*, 3 (Vilna, 1939): 801–14.
- 'Tsirkuliar o soedinenii kruzhek'. In Sapir, '*Vpered!*' 1873–1877, 2: 129–85 (document, 56). Edited by B. Sapir. Dordrecht, 1970.
- Tsitron, S. L. [Citron]. 'Aaron Samuil Liberman'. In Tsitron, *Dray literarishe doyles*, II (1921): 3–49.
- Dray literarishe doyles. Zikhroynes vegn yidishe shriftshteler*. 4 vols. Warsaw–Vilna, 1920–28.
- 'Leizer Tsukerman'. In Tsitron, *Dray literarishe doyles*, II: 50–72.
- 'Tsu der kharakteristik funem terorist Grigori Goldenberg'. In *HS*, 3 (1939): 815–16 (supplement).
- Tun, A. *Istoriia revoliutsionnago dvizheniia v Rossii*. Edited by L. E. Shishko (with a final chapter on Narodnaia Volia between 1881 and 1887). Petrograd, 1917.
- Tyrkov, A. V. 'K sobytiu 1-go marta 1881 goda'. *Byloe*, 5 (1906): 141–62.
- 'Uchastniki narodovol'cheskogo dvizheniia (1879–1896)'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 3: 288–314.
- Valk, S. N. 'G. G. Romanenko (Iz istorii "Narodnoi Voli")'. *KS*, 48 (1928): 36–59.
- Valk S. N. ed. *Arkhiv 'Zemli i voli' i 'Narodnoi voli'*. Moscow, 1930.
- Veynreykh, M. 'Neye fakten vegen ershten revoliutsioneren kruzshok in vilne'. *Forward* (New York), 27 May 1928.
- Vinchevski, M. *Gezamlte verk*. Edited by K. Marmor. X: *Erinerungen*. Part 2. New York, 1927.
- 'Mit a dur tsurik. Zundeleovich un Liberman'. *Di tsukunft* (December 1894): 1–6.
- Vittenberg, S. 'Pis'mo Vittenberga k tovarishcham'. In *Literatura sotsial'no-revoliutsionnoi partii 'Narodnoi Voli'*, 11–12.

- Voitinskii, V. S., B. I. Nikolaevskii, and L. O. Tsederbaum-Dan, eds. *Iz arkhiva P. B. Aksel'roda, 1881–1886*. Berlin, 1924.
- Vol'fson, S. "'Chorny peredzel" v Minsku'. *Polymia*, 4 (1925): 75–81.
- Volkhovskii, F. ed. 'Anna Mikhailovna Epshtein (Nekrolog)'. *Letuchie listki fonda Volnoi russkoi pressy v Londone*, 28 (January, 1896): 7.
- Volkov, N. 'Narodovol'cheskaia propaganda sredi moskovskikh rabochikh v 1881 godu'. *Byloe*, 2 (1906): 173–82.
- Volt'ke, G. 'Ot votsareniia imp. Aleksandra II'. *EE*, 13: 48–58.
- Wengeroff, P. *Memoiren einer Grossmutter. Bilder aus der Kulturgeschichte der Juden Russlands im 19. Jahrhundert*. 2 vols. Third edition. Berlin, 1922.
- 'Zakliuchenie prokurora peterburgskoi sudebnoi palaty po delu "Obshchestva druzei"'. In *IRS*, 3 (1926): 63–107.
- Zalkind, L. S. 'Dva epizoda iz zhizni A. B. Aronchika'. In *Narodovol'tsy*, 3: 35–8.
- 'Eshche neskol'ko slov o Ia. M. Kalmansone'. *KS*, 13 (1924): 231–3.
- 'Evgenii Samoilovich Gurevich'. (Obituary). *KS*, 54 (1929): 176–77.
- 'Vospominaniia narodovol'tsa'. *KS*, 24 (1926): 90–94.
- 'Zapiska, predstavleniia lavristami obshchemu sobraniu "Soiuza russkikh revoliutsionnykh grupp"'. In 'Vpered!' 1873–1877, II, pp. 204–10 (document 61). Edited by B. Sapir. Dordrecht, 1970.
- Zasulich, V. *Vospominaniia*. Edited by B. P. Koz'min. Moscow, 1931.
- [Zhebun'ev, V.]. 'Iz derevni'. *Listok Narodnoi Voli*, 1 (22 July 1881). In *Literatura sotsial'no-revoliutsionnoi partii 'Narodnoi Voli'*, 388–96.
- 'Po povodu evreiskikh besporiadkov'. *Listok Narodnoi Voli*, Beilage (20 July 1883). In *Literatura sotsial'no-revoliutsionnoi partii 'Narodnoi Voli'*, 622–6.
- [Zlatopol'skii, S. S.]. 'Iz pokazaniia S. S. Zlatopol'skogo 4 maia 1882 g'. and 'Pokazanie S. S. Zlatopol'skogo 23 sentiabria 1882 g'. In S. Valk ed. 'Iz narodovol'chestkikh avtobiograficheskikh dokumentov'. *KA*, 20 (1927): 205–31.
- 'Rech' S. S. Zlatopol'skago'. In 'Rechi podsudimyykh v protsesse 17-ti', *Byloe*, 12 (1906): 247–48.
- [Zundeleovich, A. I.]. 'Pis'ma k L. Deichu (za dva poslednie goda ego zhizni 1922 i 1923 g.g.)'. *Gruppa*, 3 (1925): 197–226.
- 'Tsvey briv fun Aaron Zundeleovich'. in *Royter pinkos*, 2 (Warsaw, 1924): 172–4. (Letters to the editors of *Royter pinkos*).
- Zunser, E. *A Jewish Bard. Being the Biography of Elias Zunser*. Edited by A. H. Fromenson. New York, 1905. In English and Yiddish).

SECONDARY SOURCES

- Agurski, S. 'Der kharakter fun der sotsialistisher bavegung tsvishn di yidishe arbeyter biz onshtheyung fun der R.S.D.A.P'. *Tsaytshrift*, 4 (Minsk, 1930): 237–55.
- Agurskii, S. *Ocherki po istorii revoliutsionnogo dvizheniia v Belorussii (1863–1917)*. Minsk, 1928.
- Aldanov, M. 'Russian Jews of the 1870s and 1880s'. In Frumkin, et al., *Russian Jewry*, 11–17.

- Alston, P. L. *Education and the State in Tsarist Russia*. Stanford, 1969.
- Aronson, I. M. *Troubled Waters. The Origins of the 1881 Anti-Jewish Pogroms in Russia*. Pittsburgh, 1990.
- Ascher, A. *Pavel Axelrod and the Development of Menshevism*. Cambridge, MA., 1972.
- ‘Pavel Axelrod: A Conflict Between Jewish Loyalty and Revolutionary Dedication’. *The Russian Review*, 24 (July 1965): 149–65.
- Avakumovic, I. ‘A Statistical Approach to the Revolutionary Movement in Russia, 1878–1887’. *SR*, 18 (1959): 182–86.
- Baron, S. W. *The Russian Jew Under Tsars and Soviets*. Second Edition. New York, 1976.
- Bergman, J. *Vera Zasulich: A Biography*. Stanford, 1983.
- Berk, S. M. ‘The Russian Revolutionary Movement and the Pogroms of 1881–1882’. *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, 7 (1977): 23–39.
- Bogucharskii, V. Ia. [V. Ia. Iakovlev]. *Aktivnoe narodnichestvo semidesiatykh godov*. Moscow, 1912.
- Iz istorii politicheskoi bor’by v 70-kh–80-kh gg. XIX veka. Partiia ‘Narodnoi Voli’, eia proiskhozhdenie, sud’by i gibel’*. Moscow, 1912.
- Brower, D. R. *Training the Nihilists. Education and Radicalism in Tsarist Russia*. London, 1975.
- Brym, R. J. *The Jewish Intelligentsia and Russian Marxism. A Sociological Study of Intellectual Radicalism and Ideological Divergence*. London, 1978.
- Bukhbinder, N. ‘Evreiskie revoliutsionnye kruzhki 80-kh i nachala 90-kh g.g.: period propagandy’. *Evreiskaia letopis’*, 1 (Petrograd–Moscow, 1923): 52–8.
- Istoriia evreiskogo rabocheho dvizheniia v Rossii*. Leningrad, 1925.
- Dubnow, S. M. *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland, from the earliest times until the present day*. 3 vols. Translated from Russian by I. Friedlaender. Philadelphia, 1916–20.
- Engel, B. A. *Mothers and Daughters. Women of the Intelligentsia in Nineteenth-Century Russia*. Cambridge, 1983.
- ‘Women Medical Students in Russia, 1872–1882: Reformers or Rebels?’ *Journal of Social History*, 12 (Spring 1979): 394–414.
- Fedotov, G. P. ‘The Religious Sources of Russian Populism’. *The Russian Review*, 1 (April 1942): 27–39.
- Filippov, R. V. *Iz istorii narodnicheskogo dvizheniia na pervom etape ‘Khozhdeniia v narod’ (1863–1874)*. Petrozavodsk, 1967.
- Frankel, J. *Prophecy and Politics. Socialism, Nationalism, and the Russian Jews, 1862–1917*. Cambridge, 1981.
- Frankel, J. ‘Socialism and Jewish Nationalism in Russia, 1892–1907’. Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge University, 1961.
- Frumkin, J., Aronson, G., and Goldenweiser, A., eds. *Russian Jewry (1860–1917)*. Translated by Mina Ginsburg. New York, 1966.
- Gessen, Iu. *Istoriia evreiskogo naroda v Rossii*. 2 vols. Leningrad, 1925–27.
- Getzler, I. *Martov: A Political Biography of a Russian Social Democrat*. Cambridge, 1967.
- Goldhagen, E. ‘The Ethnic Consciousness of Early Russian Jewish Socialists’. *Judaism*, 23 (1974): 479–96.

- Greenberg, L. *The Jews in Russia. The Struggle for Emancipation*. Two volumes in one. New York, 1976.
- Haberer, E. 'The Role of Jews in Russian Revolutionary Populism, 1868–1887'. Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Toronto, 1987.
- Haimson, L. *The Russian Marxists and the Origin of Bolshevism*. Cambridge, MA, 1955.
- Hildermeier, M. *Die Sozialrevolutionäre Partei Russlands. Agrarsozialismus und Modernisierung im Zarenreich (1900–1914)*. Cologne, 1978.
- Itenberg, B. S. *Dvizhenie revoliutsionnogo narodnichestva. Narodnicheskie kruzhki i 'Khozhdenie v narod' v 70-kh godakh XIX v.* Moscow, 1965.
- Jacobs, J. 'Karl Kautsky and the Jewish Question'. Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1982.
- Kantor, R. M. 'Dinamit "Narodnoi Voli"'. *KS*, 57–58 (1929): 118–28.
- Kappeler, A. 'Zur Charakteristik russischer Terroristen (1878–1887)'. *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 27: 4 (1979): 520–47.
- Kiei, M. 'The Jewish Narodnik'. *Judaism*, 19 (1970): 295–310.
- Klier, J. *Russia Gathers her Jews. The Origins of the 'Jewish Question' in Russia, 1772–1825*. Dekalb, 1986.
- Klier, J. and Shlomo, S. eds. *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*. Cambridge, 1992.
- Korol'chuk, E. A. 'Iz istorii propagandy sredi rabochikh Peterburga vo vtoroi polovine 70-kh godov'. In *IRS*, 3 (1926): 49–63.
- Pervaiia rabochaia demonstratsiia v Rossii. K piatidesiatiletiiu demonstratsii na Kazanskoi ploschadi v Peterburge 6/18 dekabria 1876 g.* Leningrad, 1927.
- Koz'min, B. P. 'S. G. Nechaev i ego protivniki v 1868–1869 gg'. In *Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie 1860kh godov. Sbornik*, pp. 168–226. Edited by B. I. Gorev and B. P. Koz'min. Moscow, 1932.
- Kulczycki, L. *Geschichte der russischen Revolution*, 3 vols. Translated by Anna Schapiro-Neurath. Gotha, 1910–14.
- Kusheva, E. N. 'Gobst ili Gobet?' *KS*, 64 (1930): 159–63.
- Lampert, E. *Sons Against Fathers. Studies in Russian Radicalism and Revolution*. Oxford, 1965.
- Lederhendler, E. *The Road to Modern Jewish Politics. Political Tradition and Political Reconstruction in the Jewish Community of Tsarist Russia*. Oxford, 1989.
- Levin, Sh. M. 'Dve demonstratsii (iz istorii revoliutsionnoi situatsii kontsa 70kh godov XIX v.)'. *Istoricheskie zapiski*, 54 (1955): 251–70.
- Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii v 60–70-e gody XIX veka*. Moscow, 1958.
- Liashenko, K. G. 'Ob avtorstve i istorii sozdaniia rukopisi "Ocherk po istorii kruzhka 'chaikovtsev'"'. *Istoriia SSSR*, 4 (1965): 145–50.
- Lifshits, G. M. 'K istorii moskovskogo s'ezga narodnikov 1875 g'. *Istoriia SSSR*, 4 (1965): 132–45.
- Lifshits, G. M. and Liashenko, K. G. 'Kak sozdavalas' programma vtoroi "Zemli i Voli"'. *Voprosy istorii*, 9 (September 1965): 36–50.
- Livshits, S. 'Podpol'nye tipografii 60-kh, 70-kh i 80-kh godov'. *KS*, 41 (1928): 23–33; 43 (1928): 60–78; 50 (1929): 64–80; 51 (1929): 57–74; 54 (1929): 44–59.

- McKinsey, P. S. 'From City Workers to the Peasantry: The Beginning of the Russian Movement "To the People"'. *SR*, 43 (December 1979): 629-44.
- 'The Kazan Square Demonstration and the Conflict Between Russian Workers and Intelligenty'. *SR*, 44 (Spring 1985): 83-103.
- Meijer, J. M. *Knowledge and Revolution. The Russian Colony in Zurich (1870-73)*. Amsterdam, 1956.
- Meisl, J. *Haskalah. Geschichte der Aufklärungsbewegung unter den Juden in Russland*. Berlin, 1919.
- Mendel, A. P. *Michael Bakunin. Roots of Apocalypse*. New York, 1981.
- Mendelsohn, E. *Class Struggle in the Pale: the formative years of the Jewish Workers Movement in Tsarist Russia*. Cambridge, 1970.
- 'The Russian Jewish Labour Movement and Others'. *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science*, 14 (1969): 87-98.
- Menes, A. 'The Jewish Socialist Movement in Russia and Poland (From the 1870s to the Founding of the Bund in 1897)'. *The Jewish People: Past and Present*, 2 (1949): 355-98.
- Miller, M. A. 'Ideological Conflicts in Russian Populism: The Revolutionary Manifestos of the Chaikovsky Circle, 1868-1874'. *SR*, 29 (March 1970): 1-21.
- Mishkinsky, M. 'The Attitude of the Southern Russian Workers' Union toward the Jews (1880-81)'. *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 4 (June 1982): 191-218.
- '"Black Repartition" and the Pogroms of 1881-1882'. In Klier and Lambroza, eds. *Pogroms*, 319-41.
- 'Did the Russian Jacobins (Blanquists) Have a Special Attitude Towards Jews'. In A. Rapoport-Albert and S. J. Zipperstein, eds. *Jewish History. Essays in Honour of Chimen Abramsky*, 319-41. London, 1988.
- Review of *The Jewish Bund in Russia from its Origins to 1905* by Henry J. Tobias. *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, 3 (1973): 91-6.
- Naimark, N. M. 'The "Proletariat" and "People's Will": A History and Comparison of Polish and Russian Revolutionary Socialism'. Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1972.
- Terrorists and Social Democrats: The Russian Revolutionary Movement under Alexander III*. Cambridge, MA, 1983.
- Nevskii, V. I. *Ot 'Zemli i voli' k gruppe 'Osvobozhdenie truda'*. Moscow, 1920.
- Offord, D. *The Russian Revolutionary Movement in the 1880s*. Cambridge, 1986.
- Olkhovskii, E. R. 'K istorii "Chernogo peredela" (1879-1881)'. In E. S. Vilenskaia, et al. eds. *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v poreformnoi Rossii*, 124-78. Moscow, 1965.
- Orbach, A. *New Voices of Russian Jewry. A study of the Russian-Jewish press of Odessa in the era of the great reforms 1860-1871*. Leiden, 1980.
- Orlov, B. 'A Statistical Analysis of Jewish Participation in the Russian Revolutionary Movement of the 1870s'. *Slavic and Soviet Series*, 4: 1-2 (Tel Aviv, 1979): 3-20.
- Patterson, D. *Abraham Mapu - The Creator of the Modern Hebrew Novel*. London, 1969.
- Perrie, M. 'The Social Composition and Structure of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party before 1917'. *Soviet Studies*, 24: 2 (1972): 223-50.

- Pinson, K. S. 'Arkady Kremer, Vladimir Medem, and the Ideology of the Jewish "Bund"'. *Jewish Social Studies*, 7 (1945): 233–64.
- Pipes, R. 'Narodnichestvo: A Semantic Inquiry'. *SR*, 23 (September 1964): 441–58.
- Pomper, P. *Peter Lavrov and the Russian Revolutionary Movement*. Chicago, 1972.
- Sergei Nechaev. New Brunswick, NJ, 1979.
- The Russian Revolutionary Intelligentsia*. New York, 1970.
- Raisin, J. S. *The Haskalah Movement in Russia*. Philadelphia, 1913.
- Rogger, H. *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics in Imperial Russia*. London, 1986.
- Sapir, B. 'Jewish Socialists Around Vpered'. *IRSH*, 10 (1965): 365–84.
- Schapiro, L. 'The Role of the Jews in the Russian Revolutionary Movement'. *SEER*, 40 (1961/62): 148–67.
- Schneiderman, J. *Sergei Zubatov and Revolutionary Marxism*. Ithaca, 1976.
- Sedov, M. G. *Geroicheskii period revoliutsionnogo narodnichestva. (Iz istorii politicheskoi bor'by)*. Moscow, 1966.
- Sergievskii, N. "'Chernyi Peredel" i narodniki 80-kh godov'. *KS*, 74 (1931): 7–58.
- Shub, D. 'Evrei v russkoi revoliutsii'. In D. Shub, *Politicheskie deiateli Rossii (1850-kh–1920-kh gg.)*. *Sbornik statei*. New York, 1969.
- Silberner, E. *Sozialisten zur Judenfrage. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Sozialismus vom Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts bis 1914*. Berlin, 1962.
- Stanislawski, M. *Tsar Nicholas I and the Jews. Transformation of Jewish Society in Russia, 1825–1855*. Philadelphia, 1983.
- Taubin, R. A. 'Ia.N. Bekman i Khar'kovsko-Kievskoe tainoe obshchestvo'. In M. V. Nechina, ed., *Revoliutsionnaia situatsiia v Rossii v 1859–1861 gg.*, III, 399–45. Moscow, 1963.
- Thun, A. *Geschichte der revolutionären Bewegung in Russland*. Leipzig, 1883. Reprint ed., New York, 1963.
- Tkachenko, P. S. *Revoliutsionnaia narodniceskaia organizatsiia 'Zemlia i Volia' (1876–1879)*. Moscow, 1961.
- Tobias, H. J. *The Jewish Bund in Russia from Its Origins to 1905*. Stanford, 1972.
- Troitskii, N. A. *Bol'shoe obshchestvo propagandy 1871–74 (tak nazyvaemye 'Chaikovtsy')*. Saratov, 1963.
- 'Narodnaia volia' *pered tsarskim sudom, 1880–1891 gg.* Saratov, 1971.
- 'O pervoi programme revoliutsionnogo narodnichestva 70-kh godov'. *Voprosy istorii*, 6 (1961): 208–10.
- Tsarskie sudy protiv revoliutsionnoi Rossii. Politicheskie protsessy 1871–1880 gg.* Saratov, 1976.
- 'Versiia trebuet utochnenii (ob avtorstve rukopisi "Ocherk istorii kruzhka 'chaikovtsev'")'. *Istorii SSSR*, 5 (1968): 129–35.
- Tscherikower, E. 'Peter Lavrov and the Jewish Socialist Emigrés'. *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science*, VII (1952): 132–45.
- 'Revolutsionere un natsionale ideologies fun der rusish-yidisher intelligents in di 70er un 80er yorn'. In Tscherikower ed. *Geshikhte fun der yidisher arbeter-bavegung in di fareynikte shtetn*, II, 138–202. New York, 1945.

- 'Yidn-revolutsionern in rusland in di 60er un 70 er yorn'. In *HS*, 3 (1939): 60–172.
- Tsederbaum, S. [Ezhov, V.]. *Zhenshchina v russkom revoliutsionnom dvizhenii, 1870–1905*. Moscow, 1927.
- Tvardovskaia, V. A. 'Organizatsionnie osnovy "Narodnoi Voli"'. *Istoricheskie zapiski*, 67 (1960): 103–44.
- Ulam, A. B. *In the Name of the People: Prophets and Conspirators in Prerevolutionary Russia*. New York, 1977.
- Venturi, F. *Roots of Revolution. A History of the Populist and Socialist Movements in Nineteenth Century Russia*. Translated by Francis Haskell. New York, 1966.
- Volk, S. S. *Narodnaia Volia, 1879–1882*. Moscow–Leningrad, 1966.
- Vucinich, A. *Social Thought in Tsarist Russia. The Quest for a General Science of Society, 1881–1917*. Chicago and London, 1976.
- Whittaker, C. H. *The Origins of Modern Russian Education: An Intellectual Biography of Count Sergei Uvarov, 1786–1855*. De Kalbs, 1984.
- Wildman, A. 'Russian and Jewish Social Democracy'. In A. and J. Rabinowitch, eds., *Revolution and Politics in Russia: Essays in Memory of B. I. Nicolaevsky*, 75–87. Bloomington, 1972.
- Yarmolinsky, A. *Road to Revolution. A Century of Russian Radicalism*. London, 1957.
- Zaionchkovskii, P. A. *The Russian Autocracy in Crisis, 1878–1882*. Gulf Breeze, FL, 1979.
- Zipperstein, S. J. *The Jews of Odessa: A Cultural History, 1794–1881*. Stanford, 1986.

Index

- Akselrod, Pavel B., 52, 63–73, 94, 95, 107, 114, 120–121, 124, 189, 209, 222–26, 259, 264, 268, 271
 and Chernyi Peredel, 168–69, 177–79, 270
 and Kiev circle of Chaikovtsy, 63–64, 69–70
 and Jewish Question, 68–69
 Aleksandrov, Vasilii M., 34, 35, 45, 46
 Alexander I (tsar, 1801–25), 5, 6
 Alexander II (tsar, 1855–81), 17, 24, 104, 159, 263
 assassination of (1881), 153–4, 158, 161, 164–65, 167, 186, 187, 195–98, 204, 230
see also Great Reforms
 Alexander III (tsar, 1881–94), 204, 230–31, 259
 All-Russian Socialist Organization (1874–75), 99
 anarchism
see Bakuninism
 Andress, Solomon G., 91
 Annenkov, Pavel, 244
 Anskii (An-sky, Rappoport), Semen A., 272, 320n44
 antisemitism, 172, 206–10, 228–9, 265–66
 of Bakunin, 25–26, 280n60
 and pogroms, 204–7, 221, 228
 and tsarist officials, 92, 172, 187, 201–5, 268
 Aptekman, Osip V., 35, 41, 49, 105–6, 109, 114, 118, 136–38, 143–44, 259
 and Chernyi Peredel, 168, 177–78
 and *vnarod*, 99, 100–3, 106
 Aronchik, Aizik B., 166, 192, 195
 terrorist activity of, 196–97, 199–200, 202
 Aronson, Michael, 211–12
 Ascher, Abraham, 286n40, 311n50
 assimilation, 76, 86, 105, 259, 262, 268
see also Haskalah
 authorities/officials, tsarist, 174, 198–200, 202, 308n5
 and pogroms, 204–5, 211–12
see also Alexander II; antisemitism; Great Reforms; Nicholas I; police
 Bakh, Abram L., 240–42, 249, 270, 272
 Bakst, Osip, 20–23
 Bakst, Vladimir, 20–21, 22
 Bakunin, Michael, 24, 72, 101, 105
see also antisemitism
 Bakuninism, 63, 72–3, 100–1, 104, 106–9, 113, 120, 127–28
see also Akselrod; Bakuninists; Chudnovskii; Natanson; Populism; Smirnov; Utin,
 Bakuninists/*buntari*, 62–63, 107–8, 120, 124, 132, 136, 138, 141, 150, 153
see also Bakuninism; *buntarstvo*, Chigirin conspiracy
 Bardina, Sofia, 99
 Barel, Meer-Sidor A., 79, 89, 295n22
 Baron, Salo W., 187–88, 255, 260
 Barskii, Iakov A., 244
 Bekman circle (Kharkov–Kiev secret society)
 Jewish members of, 19–20
 Beliaev, Dmitrii, 91
 Belinsky, Vassarion, 46, 67, 264
 Belskii, Konstantin, 91
 Belostok, 271
 Berlin, 4
 Jewish 'Nihilists' in, 124–25, 190–91, 295n25
 Berlin, Isaiah, 11
 Bernstein, Edward, 125
 Bervi-Flerovskii, V. V., 46, 284n63
Bestuzhevskie kursy
 Jewish students (*kursistki*) of, 234, 235–36, 237, 314n9
 Bibergal, Aleksandr N., 142
 Black Partition, *see* Chernyi Peredel

- Bograd(-Plekhanova), Rozaliia M., 168, 221–22
- Bogoraz, Praskovia M., 234, 235–36, 311n45
- Bogoraz, Natan M. (Vladimir G. Tan-Bogoraz), 235, 239–52, 270
Taganrog circle of (1882–83), 239–40
see also printing press(es); South-Russian Narodovoltzy Organization
- Bokhanovskii, Ivan, 138
- Bomash, A., 31, 280n3
- Bramson, Moisei V., 237, 257
see also Union of Youth of Narodnaia Volia
- Breitman, Aleksandr, 249
- Breshko-Breshkovskaia, Ekaterina, 72, 99
- Brower, D. R., 17, 278n24, 279n39
- Brym, Robert J., 107, 319n24
- Bukh, Nikolai K., 190
- Bund (General Jewish Labour Union in Lithuania, Poland and Russia), 93, 272, 291n55
- buntarstvo/bunty* (peasant rebellion, jacquerie), 18, 138, 149, 150
see also Bakuninists/*buntari*; Chigirin conspiracy; pogroms
- Cahan, Abraham, 217–18, 226, 319n19
- Catherine II (tsarina, 1762–92), 5
- Central Odessa Party Group (Narodnaia Volia), 244–45
- Chaikovskii, Nikolai V., 44, 45–46, 49, 70
- Chaikovskii circle(s)/Chaikovtsy, 27–93, 94–6, 107, 292n4
and Chaikovskyst Jews in Kiev, 63–64, 67–73, 99; in Moscow, 52–56, 94; in Odessa, 56–63; in St Petersburg, 36–51; in Vilna, 75–93
see also Akselrod; Chudnovskii; Epshtein; Kliachko; *knizhnoe delo*; Natanson; *rabochee delo*; Zundeleovich
- Charushin, Nikolai A., 45, 50, 56, 71
- Cherkesov, A. A., 46
- Chernov, Viktor, 320n44
- Chernyi Peredel (Black Partition)/Chernoperedeltsy, 118, 148–49, 165, 167–69, 170–72, 177–79, 268, 270, 271
in Geneva, 221–25
in Minsk, 169, 217, 219–20
in St Petersburg, 168, 169, 178–79
Zerno (workers' publication), 169, 213, 219–20
see also Akselrod; Aptekman; Deich; printing press(es)
- Chernyshevsky, Nikolai G., 14–15, 41, 42, 46, 75, 104, 264
- Chigirin conspiracy, 138–41, 297n65
see also Deich
- Chudnovskii, Solomon L., 30–1, 52, 57–63, 94, 95, 107, 299, 244, 267, 285n22
and pogroms, 58–60, 229, 267
- Circle of Narodovoltzy (1887–88), 254
- Constitutional Democrats (Kadets), 170
- crown schools, Jewish, 10–11, 13
- Davidovich, Leiba M., 79, 89, 90, 91–92, 266
- Davydovna, Rozaliia, 246
- Decembrist movement, 2–3, 25
see also Peretts, Grigorii
- Degaev, Sergei P./*Degaevshchina*, 232–33, 236–37, 238, 240, 243, 313n6
- Degaev, Vladimir P., 232
- Deich, Lev G. (Deutsch), 41, 59–60, 96–97, 103–5, 119, 160, 179, 188, 189, 222–26, 228, 259, 260, 267
and Gorinovich, 149–51, 202
and Chernyi Peredel, 168, 169
and Chigirin conspiracy, 138–40
and pogroms, 59–60, 103–4, 220–26, 267
and *v narod* movement, 99, 103, 105–6
- Dembo, Isaak V., 254
- derevenshchiki* (rural propagandists), 137, 165, 167, 168
- Disler, Aron (*provocateur*), 90
- Dobroliubov, Nikolai, 42, 46, 67
- Dobruskina, Genrietta, 234, 235, 237, 241–42
- Drenteln, General A. (Chief of Police), 161–62, 174
- Dubnow, Semen M., 6, 260
- Dvinsk, 90–91
- Efron, Isel, 125
- Ekatrinoslav
see South-Russian Narodovoltzy Organization
- Elets, 90–91
- Elhanan, Isaac, 40
- Elizavetgrad, 150–51
- emancipation, Jewish, 174–76, 184, 187, 268
see also Haskalah
- Emancipation of Labour Group, 179, 185
- Emme, V. G., 69–73
- Enlightenment, Jewish, *see* Haskalah
- Epshtein, Anna M., 73, 76–8, 93, 96, 121, 123–4, 143, 193, 234, 271, 288n8/n10

- Evenchik, Iakov, 91
 Executive Committee, Narodnaia Volia, 167, 199–200, 213–14, 220–21, 232, 236, 238
see also Tikhomirov
 exiles, political, *see* Iakutsk
- Feldman, Samuil, 244
 Figner, Vera N., 135, 143, 195, 196, 238
 Finkelshtein, I. A. (Arkadii, pseud. Apolon Valentin Litvinov), 1, 74–5, 78–9, 93, 123–24, 201, 266
 Frank, Roza F., 234, 235–36, 237, 257
 Frankel, Jonathan, 111, 214, 282n41, 309n9, 320n44
 Frenkel, Iakov, 244, 315n29
 Fridenson, Grigorii M., 195, 196
 Fundaminskii, Ilia (Isidor) I., 252, 272
 Fundaminskii, Matvei, 249, 257
- Galperin, Anna, 244
 Gassokh, Vera S., 246, 248, 249, 257
 Gausman, Albert L., 247, 249, 257, 258–59
 Geller, Semen L., 142
 Gertsenshtein, David M., 34, 281n15, 292n4
 Gessen, Iurii, 201
 Getsov, Iosif N., 169, 179, 219
 Ginsburg, Sofia M., 237, 254
 Ginzburg (Gintsburg), Baron Goratsii O., 206
 Ginzburg, Boris (Berko), 249
 Ginzburg, Lev S., 107–8, 118, 121–23, 126, 128–31, 143, 171, 270–71
 Glinka, Fedor, 2–3, 4
 Globus, Mordukh, 90
 Gobet, Israil-Aron (Gobst, Hobst) (pseud. Arsenii, Anisim, Fedorov), 150, 156–8, 159, 164, 176, 202, 263–64, 301n24
 Goldenberg, Grigorii D., 159–66, 174, 176, 180, 182–4, 195, 197, 199, 200, 263–4
 Goldenberg-Getroitman, Lazar, B., 30–31, 96
 Gordon, Judah L., 66
 Gorinovich, Nikolai E. 149, 150, 153, 202
see also Deich; Elizavetgrad
 Gots, Mikhail R., 249, 251, 252, 257, 272
 Great Reforms, Alexandrine, 11–13, 262–64
see also Alexander II
 Greenberg, Louis, 207, 255, 260
 Grinberg, Khristina G., 151, 232, 233, 313n4
- Grinfest, Saul L., 169, 179, 219, 221
 Grinshtein, Mikhail, 54, 284n8, 292n4
 Grodno, 90–91
 Grosman, Roza (Raisa) L., 233–34
 Gukovskaia, Viktoriia, 151
 Gurevich, Grigorii, E. (pseud. Gershon Badanes), 64, 65–66, 69–73, 124, 175, 188, 222–4, 227–29, 259
 Gurovich, Iakov E., 142
 Gurvich (Hourwich), Isaak A., 169, 203, 217–19, 229
 Gutzkov, Karl, 69
- Hameliz* (The Mediator), 66
 Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment)/maskilim, 4–16, 23, 40, 57–8, 64–68, 82, 83, 104–5, 110–11, 122, 130, 159, 206, 210, 262–65, 271
 and Europeanization of Jews
see also Great Reforms; intelligentsia, nihilism; seminaries
 ‘Hebrew socialism’, 83–84
see also Liberman
 Helfman, Hesia (Gesia Gelfman), 187–88, 204, 235, 241
 in Narodnaia Volia, 193–95, 198–99
- Iakimkova, Anna V., 192
 Iaklovker, Feiga, 302n40
 Iakovlev, M., 92–93
 Iakubovich, Petr, 235–37, 238
 Iakutsk (city and province), 257–58, 318n15
 Iakutsk, tragedy in, 257–58
see also Gausman; Kogan-Bernshtein
 Idelson, Rozaliia K, 127, 146, 296n30
 Ignatiev, Count Nikolai P., 204–5
 intelligentsia/intelligenty, Russian–Jewish, 114–15, 175, 189–90, 268–69, 272
 and Haskalah, 4–5, 10–14
see also Great Reforms; Haskalah; nihilism
 Iokhelson, Vladimir (Veniamin) I., 76, 79–81, 84, 86–88, 92, 98, 124, 201, 259, 264
 and Narodnaia Volia, 191–95
see also Mezentssev, General; Vilna circle
 Isaev, Grigorii, 192
 Ishutin, Nikolai, 18, 24, 25, 27, 110
 Ivanov, Sergei, 240, 242, 249, 315n29
 Ivanova-Boreisha, Sofia A., 190, 191, 193
- Jewish Question, 60, 68, 105, 174, 223–25, 267

- kahal* (Jewish communal self-government), 7, 67, 69, 157
 Kaminer, Avgusta, 69, 70, 287n55
 Kaminer, Nadezhda, 69, 70, 287n55
 Kaminer, Sofia, 69–70, 287n55
 Kaminskaia, Berta (Bet) A., 99
 Kantor, R. M., 183, 198
 Kappeler, Andreas, 150
 Karakazov, Dmitrii, 18, 24, 110
 Kats, Konstantin A., 99
 Kats, Mikhail N., 99
 Kautsky, Karl, 125
 Kazan Square Demonstration (1876), 141–42, 149, 298n72
 Kevesh, Debora, 302n40
 Kharkov, 245, 249, 316n54
 kheder (Jewish elementary religious school), 9, 11, 39, 66, 81, 82, 99, 100, 102, 263, 264
 Khotinskii, Aleksandr A., 98, 144
 Khurgin, Efim, S., 192
 Khurgin, Mordukhi, S., 192
 Kiei, M., 218
 Kiev, 64, 67, 69–73, 94, 98, 99, 151, 159–60, 255, 257, 271
 Kliachko, Samuil L., 52–56, 73, 75, 77, 78, 94, 95, 285n12–13
knizhnoe delo, 43–50, 52–55, 60–62
 in Kiev, 70–71
 in Moscow, 53–55
 in Odessa, 60–62
 see also Chudnovskii; Kliachko; Natanson
 Kobylanskii, L., 161, 164, 165
 Königsberg, 75, 89, 123–24
 Kogan, Zakhar' V., 246, 249, 250, 251, 316n42
 Kogan-Bernshtein, Lev (Iakov) M., 234–35, 239, 247, 249, 257, 258–61, 314n12
 Kolodkevich, N. N., 199
 Koretskii, Petr A., 246
 Kornilova, Aleksandra, 44, 51
 Kornilova, Lidia, 53
 Kovalskii, demonstration in
 see Odessa
 Kovalskii, Ivan M., 151, 153
 Kovalskaia, Elizaveta, 179
 Kovno, 39–40, 271
 Kraev, Semen M., 150, 300n11
 Krantsfeld, Runia (Raisa), 234, 236, 241, 242
kratser (solitary confinement), 152
 Kravchinskii, Sergei M. (pseud. Stepniak), 49, 50, 78, 99, 144, 162, 174–75, 177, 189, 194–95, 199
 Kremenchug, 151, 192
 Krol, Moisei A., 234, 239, 242, 243, 245, 248, 249, 250
 Kropotkin, Petr, 49, 50, 162,
 Kropotkin, Prince Dmitrii (Governor of Kharkov), 160–61, 164
kursistki
 see *Bestuzhevskie kursy*
 Kushelevka commune, 44–45
 Kviatkovskii, A. A., 164
 Land and Freedom, Society of, see *Zemlia i Volia*
 Lassalle, Ferdinand, 68
 Lavrov, Peter L., 26, 72, 89, 101, 105, 120, 121, 126–27, 131, 145, 146, 214–16, 225–26
Historical Letters, 36–37, 42, 46, 100, 104, 112, 113, 122
Vpered!, 61, 90, 121–3, 126, 129, 271
 Lavrovism/Lavrovists (*Vperedovtsy*), 62–3, 78, 106–9, 112–13, 120–29, 131, 132, 135, 140, 141, 146, 147–8, 157, 171, 180–81
 see also Chudnovskii; Deich; Ginzburg, Lev; Lion; Natanson, Smirnov
 Levental, Leizer (Eleazar), 64, 65–66, 69, 70, 71, 125, 286n39
 Levental, Meier (Mir), 23
 Levental, Nakhman, 64, 65–66, 69, 70, 71, 125, 286n39
 Levin, Sh.M., 180
 Levkov, Efim, 179
 Liberman, Aron S., 79, 80, 82–90, 92, 259, 264
Ha-emes (socialist Hebrew journal), 160, 190, 192
 see also Zundelevich
 Liberty and Death, 166, 167, 188, 196
 Lichkus, Roza, 193
 Liebknecht, Wilhelm, 125
 Lintvarev, Moisei, 315n29
 Lion, Solomon E., 151, 244, 246
 Lipetsk, 166–67
 Lisianskii, Saul, 315n29
 Lizogub, Dmitrii, 133, 156, 296n46
 Logovenko, I. I., 153
 Lopatin, German A. 146, 237, 238, 245, 266
 Lopatin, K., 46
 Loris-Melnikov, Count Michael T., 184, 305n28
 Lure, Semen G., 69–73, 125, 287n54–55
 Lurii, Aleksandr G., 154
 Lvov, Isaak K., 55, 99
 Lvov, Zinaida K., 55, 285n10, 292n4

- Lvovich, Saul, 169
- Magat, Abram M., 176, 237, 260, 261
- Magat, Saia M., 237
- Maidanskii, Leiba O., 150, 202, 299n7, 300n11
- Mapu, Abraham, 40
- Marx, Karl/Marxism, 24–26, 170, 185, 241, 272
see also Social Democracy
- May Laws of 1882, 267
- Medical-Surgical Academy, St Petersburg, 30–32, 99–100
- Mendelssohn, Moses, 4, 6, 11, 25, 110
see also Haskalah
- Merkulov, M. M., 92, 253, 273
- Mezentsev, General N. (Chief of Police), 162–63
- Mikhaelis, E. P., 21
- Mikhailov, Aleksandr D., 143–44, 146–47, 163, 164–65, 166, 194, 196
- Minor, Osip S., 249, 258, 272
- Minsk, 90–91, 93, 98, 99, 169, 192, 257, 271
- Mirsky, Leon, 161, 162
- Mlodetskii, Ippolit, 199, 203–4, 308n54
- Mogilev, 63–68
- Moreinis, Fanny A., 151, 155
- Moreinis, Mikhail A., 151, 154, 158
- Morozov, Nikolai A., 41, 45, 282n33
- Moscow, 52–56, 94, 95, 99, 249, 251, 252, 255
- Moshchenko, Nikandr, 136
- Motzkin, Leo, 210, 216–17
- musar* movement, 40, 282n34
- nadzor* (police surveillance), 29
- Naimark, Norman, 250, 318n13
- Narodnaia Volia (People's Will)/Narodovoltsy, 51, 58, 118, 130, 148–50, 163–67, 169–70, 171–77, 179–205, 213–14, 230–57, 268, 274–75
 'Old' and 'Young Narodovoltsy', 235, 236–37, 238, 240, 375
 and pogroms, 212–14, 218–21, 223
 in St Petersburg, 232–35
 in southern Russia, 238–52
see also Central Odessa Party Group; Executive Committee; Iakutsk tragedy; terrorism
- narodniki*
see Populism
- Natanson, Mark A., 30–51, 53–56, 60, 70, 72, 77, 94–95, 106, 107, 109, 112–15, 119–46, 148, 177, 234, 271, 272, 298n66, 302n41
 and Bakuninism, 127–28, 148–89
 and *knizhnoe delo*, 43–48, 49, 50, 283n54
 and Lavrov/Lavrovism, 36–38, 42–43, 112–13, 126–27, 128, 147–48
 and Natansonovtsy, 33–36, 43–47, 53–54, 121–26, 135, 141, 142
 and Chaikovskii circle, 31, 39, 44–45, 49, 283n51
 and Narodnaia Volia, 163–4
 and Zemlia i Volia (1876), 117–21, 134–37, 153
 and Society of Northern Populists, 108, 132–34
 and 'Union of Russian Revolutionary Groups', 121, 123, 126–29, 131, 132, 295n17
 and *v narod*, 50–51
see also Chigirin conspiracy; Ginzberg, Lev; Kazan Square Demonstration; Mikhailov; Nechaev; Populism; Smirnov; 'Society of Friends'
- Nechaev, Sergei G./*Nechaevtsy*, 24, 27, 29, 31–36 *passim*, 69
- Nechaevshchina*, 27, 35, 131
- Nevakhovich, L., 5–6
- Nicholas I (tsar, 1825–55), 3, 9–10, 12
- nihilism/nihilists, 14–15, 16–17, 22–24, 40–41, 65–67, 75–77, 82–84, 99–111, 104, 110–13, 189–90
see also Haskalah; intelligentsia; Populism; Turgenev
- Nikolaev, 151, 152–54, 156
- Northern Populists (Northern Revolutionary-Populist Groups),
 Society of, *see* Natanson
- Notkin, Iakov, 258
- Notkin, N., 5–6
- Nosovich, Leon, 169
- Novakovskii, E. Z., 142
- Novocherkassk, 246, 248, 249
- Oboleshev, Aleksei D., 146, 162–63, 302n44
- Obukhova, Vera, 251
- Odessa
 Jewish Chaikovtsy in, 57, 58–63, 94, 95, 98, 99,
 Jewish Narodovoltsy in, 242–45, 249, 255, 257, 271
- Odessa (Kovalskii) demonstration (1878), 151, 255
- Orlov, Boris, 255, 291n2, 292n12
- Osinskii, Valerian, 153, 158, 163
- Orzhikh, Boris D., 242, 243–50, 270
see also Bogoraz, Natan; South-Russian Narodovoltsy Organization

- Orzhikh, Sofia D., 151, 244
- Pale of Jewish Settlement, 7, 159, 217, 238, 271, 272
- Panteleev, L. F., 22
- Pavlov, Platon, 20
- peasants, 97–98, 103, 105, 113
see also buntarstvo; Populism; pogroms
- Peises (Pesis), Mark, 244
- People's Will *see* Narodnaia Volia
- Peretts, Abram I., 5–6
- Peretts, Grigorii, A., 1–4, 5–9, 25, 269, 272
- Perovskaia, Sofia, 44, 195, 235
- Piker, Saul, 249
- Pisarev, Dmitrii I., 15, 26, 41–42, 75, 101, 105, 110, 152, 264
see also nihilism
- Plekhanov, Georgii V., 130, 157–58, 168–69, 175, 178, 179, 214–16
- Pleve, Viacheslav K. (Director of Police Department), 241
- Pogroms (1881–82)/*pogromshchiki*, 204–05, 206–29, 216–29, 265–68
 and Alexander II, 204, 208, 209–10, 212
see also antisemitism; Chernyi Peredel; Jewish Question; Narodnaia Volia; terrorism
- Pogroms, Odessa (1871), 58–60, 103–4, 267
see also Chudnovskii, Deich
- Poliakov, Mikhail M., 246, 316n45
- Poliakov, N. P. 46–47
- police, tsarist, 90, 92–93, 182–83, 195, 201, 232, 251, 253, 257, 273
- Populism/Populists (*narodniki*), 26, 36–37, 103, 94–115, 111–12, 114, 143, 165, 169–71, 207, 255, 270, 280n61
 and nihilist-Populism, 42–43, 70, 113, 115, 128, 177
 and peasants, 97–98, 101, 173
 'Russianness' of, 26, 96–97, 112, 114
see also Bakuninism; Chaikovskii circle; Chernyi Peredel; Lavrovism; Natanson; *v narod* movement; Zemlia i Volia
- Portugalov, Veniamin O., 19–20
- Presniakov, A., 149
- Pribylev, Alexandre N., 233
- Pribyleva, A. N., 220
- printing press(es), Jewish operated
 clandestine, 22–23, 144–45, 169, 189–90, 219, 234, 236, 240–41, 244, 246, 248–49, 251
- Rabinovich-Chernyi, Mikhail G., 91, 93, 169
- Rabinovich, Moisei A., 99, 107, 109
rabochee delo (workers' propaganda/cause), 50, 51, 56, 71
- Rashevskii, I. F., 69–73
- Rashkov, Aron L., 154
- Ratner, Mark B., 218
- raznochintsy*, 14–15, 21, 42
see also nihilism
- Réclus, Elisée, 224, 225
- Rogachev, Dmitrii, 99
- Rogger, Hans, 211–22
- Romanenko, Gerasim G., 209, 210, 212–13, 214, 215–16, 220, 221, 228 309n9, 310n29
- Rostov-on-Don, 240–42
- Rozenfeld, Lev I., Elizavetgrad circle of, 150, 202, 300n11
- Rozenshtein, Anna 99, 107, 139, 286n33
- Rozovskii, Iosif I., 203, 308n53
- Rubanchik, Evgeniia I., 169, 179
- Rubanovich, Ilia (pseud. I. Iliashevich), 266–67, 268, 272
- Russian Social Democratic Workers Party (RSDWP), 118, 170, 231
- Salanter, Israel, 40
- Sapir, Boris, 121, 296n30
- Satanover, M. (Levin), 5–8
- Schapiro, Leonard, 260, 269, 270
- Seminaries, rabbinical, 9–10, 12–13, 21, 74–83, 264
- Serno-Solovevich, N. A., 22
- Shapiro, Lazar, 31, 108, 280n3
- Sharashkin, Nikolai F., assassination of, 149
- Shchedrin, Nikolai, 179
- Shebalin, Mikhail P., 236, 311n45
- Shebeko, General N. I., 198, 199, 253–54, 255, 318n13
- Sheftel, Felitsiia I., 142
- Sheftel, Mikhail I., 169
- Shekhter, Anastasiia N. 151, 246–47, 248, 249, 257
- Shekhter, Sofia, 151
- Shiriaev, A. V., 192
- Shishko, Leonid E., 45
- Shleisner(-Natanson), Olga, 44, 146, 162–63
- Shlemenzon, Lazar, S., 244
- Shternberg, Lev, Ia., 234, 239, 242–43, 245, 248, 250, 251
- Shur, Khasia, 125
- Shvartsman, Dora, 69, 287n54–55, 292n4
- Sidorov, N. I., 273
- Sinegub, S. S., 49
- Slutskii, Aizik I., 91

- Smirnov, Valerii (editor of *Vpered!*), 89,
121, 126, 127–29, 146, 148–49
- Smolenskin, Perets, 66
Ha-shahar (The Dawn), 82, 190
- Snop, Eliot, I. (Elii Itskovich), 91
- Social Democracy, German, 26, 125, 130,
171, 177, 178–79, 185, 269–70,
271–72
- Social Democracy, Russian, 130, 179, 240,
251–52, 270, 271–2
- Socialism, Populist Jewish, 74, 86–87,
102–3, 114, 122, 181–83, 189, 261,
263, 270
see also assimilation; cosmopolitanism;
Populism; Social Democracy
- Socialist Revolutionaries, Party of (PSR),
18, 118, 170, 231, 250, 251–52, 272,
320n44
- ‘Society of Friends’, 141, 149
- Society for the Promotion of Culture
among Jews
see Ginzburg, Baron Goratsii
- Sokolov, N. V., 46, 283n53
- Solomonovich, Morits L., 249
- Soloviev, A. K., 164–65
- Solskii, D. M., 211
- South-Russian Narodovoltsy
Organization/Orzhikh-Bogoraz group
(1885–86), 245–50, 254
Ekatrinoslav congress of, 245, 247–48,
249–50, 271
see also Bogoraz, Natan; Orzhikh,
Boris; printing presse(s); Shternberg
St Petersburg, 27–51, 99, 119–23, 161–62,
164–65, 232–37, 255
student congress in (1869/70), 43–44,
54
- Stefanovich, Iakov, 138
- Sudeikin, Colonel G. H., 232–33, 236
- Sukhomlin, Vasilii I., 244, 245
- Taganrog, 239–40, 245, 246, 248, 249
- talmud-torah, 9, 16, 17, 104
- Tan-Bogoraz, *see* Bogoraz
- Technical Institute, St Petersburg, 31, 83
- Tetelman, Dora, 244
- Tetelman, Ekaterina, 244
- terrorism, Populist revolutionary, 146–70,
149–61, 162–66, 186–205
- Tikhomirov, Lev A., 54, 55, 193, 212,
214
- Tishchenko, Iuri, 99, 136
- Tiutchev, N., 149
- Tkachenko, P. S., xiv
- Tkachev, Petr/ Tkachevism
(Jacobinism)/Tkachevists, 109, 180
- Tobias, Henry J., xii
- Tolstoi, Count Dmitrii A. (Minister of
Interior), 29, 241
- Troglodytes, Society of, 133, 294n6
- Troitskii, N. A., 274, 292n4
- Tsakni, N., 55
- tsarist authorities/officials
see authorities; police
- Tscherikower, Elias (Elyohu Cherikover),
12–13, 96, 107, 111, 158–59, 173–74,
176, 200, 209, 216–17, 228, 260,
301n23
- Tseitlin, Joshua, 5–8 *passim*
- Tsukerman, Leizer I., 46, 65, 66–7, 124,
155, 175, 189–91, 264
- Tula, 251
- Turgenev, Ivan, 67
Fathers and Sons Bazarov, 15, 41, 111
- Ulianov, Aleksandr I., 237
- Union of Russian Revolutionary Groups
(1875–76)
see Natanson
- Union of Youth of Narodnaia Volia (St.Petersburg, 1883–84), 236–37
- Uste (Mogilev province), 5–6, 7
- Utin, Evgenii I., 21
- Utin, Nikolai I., 21–23, 24–26, 177, 269,
272
- Uvarov, Count Sergei S. (Minister of
Education/Enlightenment), 9
- v narod* movement (‘going to the people’,
1873–75), 51–52, 56, 95–106, 117,
121, 131, 142, 156, 160, 180, 191
see also Deich, Aptekman, Natanson
- Vanel, Grisha, 89
- Vasiliev, Zakhar, 241
- Veinberg, Iosif P., 242
- Venturi, Franco, 27–28, 119, 164, 166
- ‘Vertepniki’, 19, 279n42
- Vilna, 1, 74–93, 99, 257, 271
- Vilna circle, first (1873–75), 75, 79–88,
92–93, 98, 256
and Hebrew/Yiddish language, 83–86
see also Finkelshtein; Liberman;
Zundelevich
- Vilna circle, second (1875–76), 88–92, 93,
98, 256
- Vittenberg, Solomon Ia., 150, 151–56,
158, 159, 164, 176, 202, 256, 259,
264, 300n13
- Voitinskii, V. S., 209
- Volfson, S., 169
- Volkhovskii, Felix, 52, 57, 60, 61
- Voronezh, 166

- Vperedovtsy
 see Ginzburg, Lev;
 Lavrovism/Lavrovists
Vulfovskaja kommuna, 34, 44, 77
- women, Jewish revolutionary, 69–70, 151,
 233–36, 237, 246–49, 318n15
 see also *Bestuzhevskie kursy*; and
 individual entries
- yeshiva, 9, 11, 81, 264
Yiddish language
 see Vilna circle (first, second),
 Hebrew/Yiddish language
 controversy
- Zagorskii, K. Ia., 219, 220
Zaidner, Aleksandr N., 154
Zalkind, Mina M., 337
Zalman ('Red Shmul'), 124, 295n21
Zaslavskii, E., South Russian Workers'
 Union of, 156
Zasulich, Vera, 151, 168, 169
Zelenskii, Lev M., 19–20
Zemlia i Volia, first (Land and Freedom,
 1861–62), 17–18, 20–24
Zemlia i Volia/Zemlevoltsy, second (Land
 and Freedom, 1876–79), 117–45,
 146–48, 157–58, 165–67, 169
 program of, 127, 134–35
 and terrorism, 146, 161–66, 175–76
 see also Chigirin conspiracy; Kazan
 Square Demonstration; Liberty and
 Death; Northern Populists;
 Populism; terrorism; 'Society of
 Friends'
- Zheliabov, Andrei, 58, 59, 185, 229, 235,
 286n33, 314n12
Zhitlovskii, Chaïm, 272, 320n44
Zionism/Zionists, 206, 210, 266, 267, 272,
 316n45
Zlatopolskii, Lev S., 150, 152, 300n11
 mekhanik of Narodnaia Volia, 195–96,
 199–200, 246
Zlatopolskii, Savellii S., 150, 152, 180–82,
 199, 220–21, 232–33, 235, 238
 and Narodnaia Volia, 181, 184, 196
 and terrorism, 195–196, 197, 199–200
Zotov, Nikolai, 258
Zubatov, Sergei V./*Zubatovshchina*, 251
Zundelevich, Aron I., 80, 81–82, 92, 93,
 98, 104, 118, 121, 143, 146–47, 148,
 156, 161, 164–65, 174–76, 177, 178,
 179, 188–89, 191, 199, 202, 228–29,
 259, 264, 271, 302n41
 and Narodnaia Volia, 166–67, 188
 and underground/contrabandist
 organization, 78–79, 96, 123–26,
 295n21
Zemlia i Volia, 144–45, 161
 and German Social Democracy, 147,
 175
 and Lizugub inheritance, 163, 167,
 296n46
 and Vilna circles 78–88, 89–92
 see also Mezentssev, General; Narodnaia
 Volia
Zunser, Eliakum, 1
Zurich, 254